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Shakespeare, William  
Macbeth

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Shakespeare's  
**Macbeth**

EDITED WITH NOTES BY

ELIZABETH A. ALLEN, M.A.

TORONTO

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MACBETH

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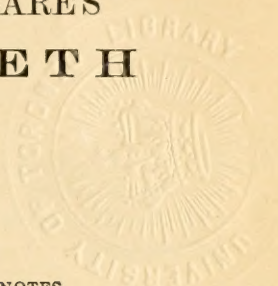
ELIZABETH A. ALLIN, M.A.

English Teacher, High School, Bowmanville

TORONTO

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# INTRODUCTION

## DATE OF COMPOSITION

THERE are always certain internal evidences of the time at which a play has been written, and these are not lacking in *Macbeth*.

James VI of Scotland in 1603 ascended the throne of England as James I, and the great Elizabethan dramatist, who had graced the last reign with many of his best productions, no doubt desired to show that he was a loyal subject of the new sovereign and accordingly wrote a play entitled *Macbeth*, in which, however, Banquo, an ancestor of James, is the man whose character towers above the rest in "royalty of nature and dauntless temper of mind." Also the reference to the union of the English and Scottish crowns—

"And some I see  
That twofold balls and treble sceptres carry "

shows definitely that the play was written after 1603 and probably about 1605, as it would not be long after the king's accession.

External evidence found in the diary of Dr. Simon Forman proves that it was written before April, 1610, as he mentions having seen it played in the Globe Theatre at that time.

## SOURCES OF THE PLAY

ALL the historical material used in the play was derived from Holinshed's *Chronicles of Englande, Scotlande and Irelande*, but, since the dramatist was not dependent upon historical facts, he has deviated from these in many particulars to suit his purpose. In the chronicles there are two murders recorded—Macbeth murdered Duncan; and Donwald, King Duffe. The Macbeth of history killed a tyrant, whose claim to

the throne was not so good as his own; and Lady Macbeth took vengeance upon a man who had done her cruel wrong. These bare facts would not have been sufficient for the development of the plot of the play, and the characters of Macbeth and his wife would have been entirely different.

Shakespeare's characters are his own production, and under no circumstances does he allow history to govern him in this direction. The dramatist is right in this, is he not? Historians differ so very much in the mere portrayal of fact that, when we come to character study, we have practically none in history. The only way in which we may truly study character in literature is through certain kinds of biography or autobiography; hence a drama, in so far as it shows us character through the light of the speeches of men, is at least true to the conception of that character in the mind of the dramatist.

It is held by some critics that a part of the play does not bear the mark of Shakespeare's hand, but does it not appear reasonable to believe, in so great a composition, where the master mind was hastening on with the development of so weighty and deep a conception, that in minor details we might find material for criticism? That Shakespeare was accustomed to elicit assistance from other play-writers is not sufficiently authenticated for us to accept lightly the suggestion that he did so in this particular instance.

## THE STORY OF THE PLAY

WHAT can be more fitting for the introductory scene of this tragedy than a desert place, where a storm is raging, and three fatal sisters, the Witches, planning to meet with Macbeth upon this same heath? Their words are prophetic of the whole plot, "Fair is foul and foul is fair."

Duncan, King of Scotland, receives the news of the successful issue of battle owing to the bravery of his two generals, Macbeth and Banquo, and of the former in particular. He resolves to reward Macbeth's prowess by bestowing upon him the title of a rebel subject, the thane of Cawdor, who has proved a traitor to him,—a traitor's title is to be given to an embryo traitor. We are now prepared for the second meeting of the Witches and their appearance before Macbeth and Banquo as the generals are returning from battle.

Their first salute begins with a truth—his present title, "Macbeth, thane of Glamis;" the second, a half truth, the title "thane of Cawdor," which Ross is hastening to bestow upon him from the king, and lastly, a prophecy of kingship—"Macbeth, king hereafter." Immediately after their disappearance Ross brings his news, and the double truth, for Macbeth, points forward as "a happy prologue to the swelling act of the imperial throne."

When he is ushered into the presence of his king and hears that his sovereign, in order further to show his respect, intends to visit him, he sees an immediate means of accomplishing that which has already taken deep and deadly root in his mind. He hastens to despatch a letter to his wife, in which he tells her of all that has transpired and a hint of that which his ambitious intent makes him anxious that she should "lay to her heart." Soon after he himself arrives, and we already conjecture the end when we know that the indomitable love and will-power of his wife make her willing to forget the tenderness of womanhood and her own fine nature in order that she may be able to assist her lord in that which he has made her feel is necessary to his highest ambition.

The king soon reaches Macbeth's castle; the murder is committed, and the perpetrators of the crime succeed in making it appear that the king's grooms are the guilty

parties and, to make detection impossible, Macbeth immediately kills them. He is then crowned at Scone, as Duncan's sons have fled because they feared the snake had been "scotched, not killed," or, in other words, that they too are in danger.

Macbeth is now king, but to make assurance doubly sure he kills Banquo, the only man who may with good cause suspect him and to whose issue the Witches have promised sovereignty, and if so for Banquo's issue Macbeth has "filed" his mind. The failure of the hired murderers to kill Banquo's son, Fleance, at the same time, is the first dislodged stone in the arch of Macbeth's success and from this time we are hurried rapidly on to the end.

After Banquo's death, Macbeth seeks the Witches once more to catch a further glimpse of the future. They warn him against Macduff, show him the descendants of Banquo crowned, but assure him that he need not fear "man of woman born," nor until he sees great Birnam wood marching on Dunsinane. As soon as he leaves them, he learns that Macduff has already fled, but he slays the wife and children and burns the castle. This arouses a spirit of deadly revenge in Macduff when he hears it, and he immediately returns with Malcolm to wreak vengeance upon the tyrant.

Lady Macbeth, whose reason has given way, dies while her husband is being besieged by the invading army, who bore branches from great Birnam wood to conceal their number as they approached. Macduff, who was fitted by his untimely birth to fulfil the second prophecy of the Witches, kills Macbeth, and the tragedy is at an end.

Truly the play teaches that "time and the hour runs through the roughest day," and although good things of day had begun and continued to droop and drowse, the course of evil pursued has finally met



with retribution; the inward reality, which found expression in crime, has received merited punishment.

## THE PERSONAGES OF THE DRAMA

### MACBETH

THE Witches name the man whom they are to meet on the day of his success and hail with promises of a greater future, and common superstition immediately gives them credit for corrupting a brave general; but, as no seed will take deep and lasting root unless it finds food in the soil, so these suggestions to Macbeth would not have caused him to start and seem to fear such fair sounding words had they not had special significance owing to previous thought in his own mind. He would not have cherished these prophecies and made them truths by his own act, had his nature not been such as to lead him to do so. The weird sisters simply voiced his own ambitions—he it was who would accomplish these through crime. Lady Macbeth, too, is by some considered partially responsible for the first murder, and she is, but only in so far as her wifely devotion makes her determine to forget her very nature in order to help Macbeth become that, in his own act, which he is already in desire.

Macbeth was a brave soldier and his worldly honour was stainless, but his moral nature was not of such a type as to make him look upon a crime with horror because it was a crime. His vaulting ambition made him desire kingship, and only the natural feeling of repugnance against doing what is unnatural deterred him from the crime. He reasons about the murder, and there are certain things which we must observe if we are to understand his character. At no time does he blame the Witches or show that he is being led by them, and the only reasons he gives for not killing the king do not show any conscientious scruples. The

king has honoured him lately and he has won golden opinions; these things he would enjoy for a time, not lay aside so soon. Then, too, he fears the consequences if he should be found out. The life to come does not trouble him, but probable punishment in this life does. He has a worldly code of honour which he violates when he kills Duncan, but it never troubles him afterward, and his nature shows the utmost cruelty when he puts to death the innocent wife of Macduff and her children. His is an entirely selfish nature too, for both the worlds may suffer for aught he cares, provided he can get what he desires.

Shakespeare is a lover of contrasts, and this is markedly shown in the leading characters. Macbeth is superstitious; his wife's philosophy has led her beyond this. One murder with Macbeth is a stepping-stone to further unnecessary crimes committed apparently without any pangs, while Lady Macbeth's powerful will breaks and her reason deserts her as the result of this crime. Macbeth listens intently to the words of the Witches and murderous thoughts fill his mind, while Banquo prays that even in sleep he may be saved from "the cursed thoughts that nature gives way to in repose."

Macbeth is a wordy, insincere, cruel, dependent, superstitious, vacillating, ambitious, undisciplined man, great in profession but shallow in true depth of character and a moral coward. The only quality which has won our admiration for him is his bravery as a soldier, and this is a characteristic of the man from first to last, but it is not united with moral worth. This kind of courage can face a present danger but it is at a loss when retributive results lie in the distance.

His poetical bent enhances the dramatic interest when his imagination finds expression in those outbursts of fear and hesitation, but we, too, like Lady Macbeth,

can scarcely endure his words when we know how far they are from picturing any true feeling and almost seem to indicate that he revels in horrors.

### LADY MACBETH

THE direct antithesis of her husband's, her character is even more interesting to us. Her will is nearly all-powerful. She determines to forget her womanly nature in order that the man whom she loves may not, through lack of her assistance, fail to accomplish that which she believes necessary to his happiness, and for a time she almost succeeds. The finer qualities of her nature she no doubt realizes, but, for the time being, and in the crisis, these must be forgotten, but they occasionally appear in spite of her efforts. She says "had he not resembled my father as he slept I had done it," and faints when her husband adds crime to crime by the murder of the grooms, and the climax of horrors afterwards "whispers the o'erfraught brain and bids it break." Her terrible remorse, as shown in the sleep-walking scene, reveals the greatness of the effort that had been made to overcome the strongest impulses of her nature and how intense the agony is which follows.

She loved her husband, but she knew his weaknesses. Before we have been introduced to Macbeth he has thought of the means whereby he may become king and has revealed this to his wife, for she says, "What beast was it then that made you break this enterprise to me?" She has weighed his words, and when he shows her how this may become an immediate reality she loses her career in his and by her strength of will holds him to that which she knows will lead him quickly to the goal, for he cannot endure suspense. When the first crime is committed she is no longer necessary to him, and a breach begins slowly to widen between them. She

can infer Banquo's death, but she is to be "ignorant of the knowledge" of his plans concerning it and so with the murders at Macduff's castle. What a world of agony he is creating for her! We shrink from listening to her as she says, "The thane of Fife had a wife, where is she now?"

She wakens our sympathy when she cannot do the deed because the king, as he sleeps, resembles her father. Macbeth's description of the murdered king and his assassination of the grooms fill her with a horror that is too great and we pity her as she swoons. At the banquet, when she guards him, she wins our deepest sympathy and admiration, which gives way to a feeling of awe when we see the terrible effect upon her mind. The spirit of remorse is sovereign now, and at last the long struggle to subdue that which wholly unfitted her to assist in a crime has driven her to madness.

### BANQUO

As the Witches have expressed it, Banquo is "lesser than Macbeth and greater." Macbeth is evidently the greater general and wins higher distinction, but when the two men are compared from the standpoint of morality the character of Banquo shines like a bright star, while Macbeth's is pale and shrouded in gloom.

Banquo listens calmly to the Witches, commands them to speak and they obey, for he neither seeks their favour nor fears their hate.

When they approach Macbeth's castle, his words show that he is a lover of nature and a close observer, and this characteristic is made apparent in more ways than one. When Macbeth hears the prophetic words, Banquo at once observes that he "starts and seems to fear things that do sound so fair" and moreover seems "rapt withal." Macbeth fears him because his evil spirit is rebuked by Banquo and when he has suggested

possible advantage to Banquo if the latter cleaves to his party, and finds a man who above all will ever keep his bosom franchised and allegiance clear, murderous thoughts once more fill his mind.

Banquo has watched the course of events and what he thinks is evident,—

“Thou hast it now; king, Cawdor, Glamis, all,  
As the weird women promised, and, I fear,  
Thou play’dst most foully for it.”

It is not necessary for him to tell Macbeth this, the latter knows it,—

“Ours fears in Banquo  
Stick deep; and in his royalty of nature  
Reigns that which would be feared; ’t is much he  
dares  
And, to that dauntless temper of his mind,  
He hath a wisdom that doth guide his valour  
To act in safety,” etc.

Banquo must pay the penalty for being noble and incorruptible. The price paid is his life, but his death is the keystone of the arch, which, being loosed, causes it to topple upon the head of Macbeth.

## THE WITCHES

ABOUT this time James was instituting a regular crusade against those creatures to whom superstition applied the name of witches, and their introduction may be considered a kind of compliment to the king; but, while they would appeal to Shakespeare’s audience as the common witches of the day with their fantastic appearance, dances, cave, cauldron and hell-broth, still we know that they meant far more. The Witches are the representatives of that world which man’s imagination constructs for him but which is in truth only the inward reality of life, to many incomprehensible and veiling in mystery the temptations to which we are all more or less subject. These are only the out-



come of our evil nature, and sin and crime are the terrible results which follow if they are listened to and obeyed.

Shakespeare, the dramatist, saw that bold realism was sometimes advantageous, and he used it to give the people a conception of a philosophy which must otherwise be to them an abstraction. The Witches, to the people, might seem to be leading Macbeth on to destruction, but, vaguely perhaps, they will see the true significance; namely, that these beings merely voice his secret thoughts and ambitions and draw out what is in his mind, or, as Hudson expresses it, "they represent the mysterious action and reaction between the evil mind and external nature."

### GENERAL CRITICISM

THE play is a tragedy, the general character of which cannot be better expressed than by the words, "Good things of a day begin to droop and drowse." Nature in Shakespeare is always represented as sympathizing with man. In *Julius Cæsar* "the heavens themselves blaze forth the death of princes," and in *Macbeth* night and storm are fitting accompaniments of the deeds which are committed.

The play is meant primarily for the stage, and every device is used that may contribute to enhance the scenic and tragic interest. The desert heath, thunder and lightning, the Witches over their cauldron, the air-drawn dagger, the horrors of repeated murders, the appearance of a ghost, the massacre at Macduff's castle, a mad queen,—all these form part of a great tragedy, in which we move as it were on the limits of life and constantly face death.





## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

DUNCAN, King of Scotland.

MALCOLM, }  
DONALBAIN, } his sons.

MACBETH, }  
BANQUO, } generals of the king's army.

MACDUFF, }  
LENNOX, }  
ROSS, }  
MENTEITH, } noblemen of Scotland.  
ANGUS, }  
CAITHNESS, }

FLEANCE, son to Banquo.

SIWARD, Earl of Northumberland, general of the English forces.

Young SIWARD, his son.

SEYTON, an officer attending on Macbeth.

Boy, son to Macduff.

An English Doctor.

A Scotch Doctor.

A Soldier.

A Porter.

An Old Man.

LADY MACBETH.

LADY MACDUFF.

Gentlewoman attending on Lady Macbeth.

[HECATE.]

Three Witches.

Apparitions.

Lords, Gentlemen, Officers, Soldiers, Murderers, Attendants and Messengers.

SCENE : *Scotland : England.*

# MACBETH

## ACT I

### SCENE I. *A desert place.*

*Thunder and lightning. Enter three Witches.*

*First Witch.* When shall we three <sup>1</sup> meet again  
In thunder, lightning, or in rain?<sup>2</sup>

*Sec. Witch.* When the hurlyburly's done,  
When the battle's lost and won.<sup>3</sup>

*Third Witch.* That will be ere the set of sun. 5

*First Witch.* Where the place?

*Sec. Witch.* Upon the heath.<sup>4</sup>

*Third Witch.* There to meet with Macbeth.

*First Witch.* I come, Graymalkin!<sup>5</sup>

*Sec. Witch.* Paddock <sup>6</sup> calls.

*Third Witch.* Anon. 10

*All.* Fair is foul, and foul is fair; <sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> **Three**—One of the numbers connected with superstition and witchcraft.

<sup>2</sup> **In . . . rain**—This atmosphere of storm and gloom is suitable for the introduction of the three Witches and prepares us for the tragedy which is to follow.

<sup>3</sup> **When . . . won**—The first scene should awaken the interest of the audience in the dramatic groundwork of the play and the chief actor. The battle and Macbeth's success make the first prophecy possible.

<sup>4</sup> **Upon the heath**—The place. Sunset, when "the things of day begin to droop and drowse" and a heath (which, by the way, is not the desert place where they first meet) supply a fitting time and place for the first meeting between Macbeth and the Witches.

<sup>5</sup> **Graymalkin**—A common name for a cat.

<sup>6</sup> **Paddock**—A toad. Witches, according to the current superstitions of the time, frequently appeared in these forms.

<sup>7</sup> **Fair . . . fair**—Note these prophetic words of the Witches and the first words spoken by Macbeth. What appears fair is really evil, and *vice versa*.

Hover through the fog and filthy air. [Exeunt.

SCENE II. *A camp near Forres.*

*Alarum within. Enter DUNCAN, MALCOLM, DONALBAIN, LENNOX, with Attendants, meeting a bleeding Captain.*

*Dun.* What bloody man is that? He can report,  
As seemeth by his plight, of the revolt  
The newest state.

*Mal.* This is the sergeant  
Who like a good and hardy soldier fought  
'Gainst my captivity. Hail, brave friend! 5  
Say to the king the knowledge of the broil  
As thou didst leave it.

*Cap.* Doubtful it stood;  
As two spent swimmers, that do cling together  
And choke their art.<sup>1</sup> The merciless Macdonwald — 10  
Worthy to be a rebel, for to that  
The multiplying villanies of nature  
Do swarm upon him<sup>2</sup> — from the western isles  
Of<sup>3</sup> kerns and gallowglasses<sup>4</sup> is supplied;  
And fortune, on his damned quarrel smiling,  
Show'd like a rebel's whore: but all's too weak: 15  
For brave Macbeth — well he deserves that name —  
Disdaining fortune, with his brandish'd steel,  
Which smoked with bloody execution,  
Like valour's minion<sup>5</sup> carved out his passage

---

<sup>1</sup> **Choke their art**—Render it of no effect. Choke is suggested by the word swimmer.

<sup>2</sup> **For to that . . . him**—For nature has naturally fitted him to be this.

<sup>3</sup> **Of**—With.

<sup>4</sup> **Kerns and gallowglasses**—Light-armed and heavy-armed Irish infantry.

<sup>5</sup> **Disdaining . . . slave**—Macbeth, relying upon his prowess alone, and not upon Fortune, used his sword to win his way through difficulties to his enemy. **Minion**—Favourite.

Till he faced the slave; 20  
 Which ne'er shook hands, nor bade farewell to him,  
 Till he unseam'd him from the nave to the chaps,<sup>1</sup>  
 And fix'd his head upon our battlements.

*Dun.* O valiant cousin!<sup>2</sup> worthy gentleman!

*Cap.* As whence the sun 'gins his reflection 25  
 Shipwrecking storms and direful thunders break,  
 So from that spring whence comfort seem'd to come  
 Discomfort swells. Mark, King of Scotland, mark:  
 No sooner justice had with valour arm'd  
 Compell'd these skipping kerns to trust their heels, 30  
 But the Norweyan lord surveying vantage,  
 With furbish'd arms and new supplies of men  
 Began a fresh assault.<sup>3</sup>

*Dun.* Dismay'd not this  
 Our captains, Macbeth and Banquo?

*Cap.* Yes;  
 As sparrows eagles, or the hare the lion. 35  
 If I say sooth,<sup>4</sup> I must report they were  
 As cannons overcharged with double cracks,<sup>5</sup> so they  
 Doubly redoubled strokes upon the foe:  
 Except they meant to bathe in reeking wounds,

<sup>1</sup> **Nave to the chaps**—From the navel to the jaws. The excitement of the sergeant is dramatically shown by the abrupt style and disconnected speeches.

<sup>2</sup> **Cousin**—Macbeth and Duncan were actually cousins. The title, however, is often one of courtesy only.

<sup>3</sup> **As whence . . . assault**—Macbeth and Banquo would naturally expect that success would follow this slight advantage, but, just as disastrous storms often come from where the sun is shining, so did a fresh attack on the part of the Norweyan lord follow closely upon this. **Skiping**—Cowardly, because they ran away. **Surveying vantage**—Seeing an opportunity to win some advantage. **Furbish'd**—Burnished.

<sup>4</sup> **Say sooth**—Speak truth.

<sup>5</sup> **Cracks**—Charges or loads.

Or memorize another Golgotha,<sup>1</sup>

40

I cannot tell.

But I am faint, my gashes cry for help.

*Dun.* So well thy words become thee as thy wounds;  
They smack<sup>2</sup> of honour both. Go get him surgeons.

[*Exit Captain, attended.*]

Who comes here?

45

*Enter Ross and ANGUS.*

*Mal.* The worthy thane<sup>3</sup> of Ross.

*Len.* What a haste looks through his eyes! So  
should he look

That seems to speak<sup>4</sup> things strange.

*Ross.* God save the King!

*Dun.* Whence camest thou, worthy thane?

*Ross.* From Fife, great king;

Where the Norweyan banners flout<sup>5</sup> the sky

And fan our people cold. Norway himself,

50

With terrible numbers,

Assisted by that most disloyal traitor,

The thane of Cawdor, began a dismal conflict;

Till that Bellona's bridegroom,<sup>6</sup> lapp'd in proof,

Confronted him with self-comparisons,

55

Point against point rebellious, arm 'gainst arm,

Curbing his lavish spirit: and, to conclude,

<sup>1</sup> **Memorize another Golgotha**—Make memorable a battle-field which, on account of the number slain, would resemble Golgotha or "place of a skull," where Christ was crucified.

<sup>2</sup> **Smack**—Bear the mark or stamp of.

<sup>3</sup> **Thane**—A servant of a king, next in rank to an earl.

<sup>4</sup> **Seems to speak**—His looks showed what his message was ere he spoke.

<sup>5</sup> **Flout**—Mock defiantly. The historic present is used referring to the success of Norway at first.

<sup>6</sup> **Till that Bellona's bridegroom . . . spirit**—Until Macbeth (worthy to wed the Roman goddess of war on account of his bravery) clad in armour, met Cawdor in hand to hand conflict and finally turned the scale of battle in their favour.



The victory fell on us.

*Dun.*

Great happiness!

*Ross.*

That now

Sweno, the Norway's king, craves composition;<sup>1</sup>

Nor would we deign him burial of his men

60

Till he disbursed at Saint Colme's inch<sup>2</sup>

Ten thousand dollars<sup>3</sup> to our general use.

*Dun.* No more that thane of Cawdor shall deceive

Our bosom interest:<sup>4</sup> go pronounce his present death,

And with his former title greet Macbeth.

65

*Ross.* I'll see it done.

*Dun.* What he hath lost noble Macbeth hath won.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III. *A heath near Forres.*

*Thunder. Enter the three Witches.*

*First Witch.* Where hast thou been, sister?

*Sec. Witch.* Killing swine.<sup>5</sup>

*Third Witch.* Sister, where thou?

*First Witch.* A sailor's wife had chestnuts in her lap,

And munch'd, and munch'd, and munch'd:—"Give

me," quoth I:

5

"Ar'nt<sup>6</sup> thee, witch!" the rump-fed<sup>7</sup> ronyon<sup>8</sup> cries.

Her husband's to Aleppo gone, master o' the Tiger:

<sup>1</sup> **Craves composition**—Begs for peace.

<sup>2</sup> **Saint Colme's inch**—Inchcolm, St. Columba Isle in the Firth of Forth. *Inis* is the Celtic word for island.

<sup>3</sup> **Dollars**—Were first introduced in 1518.

<sup>4</sup> **Bosom interest**—Personal trust.

<sup>5</sup> **Killing swine**—A common superstition concerning witches.

<sup>6</sup> **Aroint**—Avaunt, begone.

<sup>7</sup> **Rump-fed**—Coarsely fed. Some interpret this word to mean just the opposite, but this would seem inconsistent when we consider who the person was.

<sup>8</sup> **Ronyon**—French *rognon*. A scabby, mangy person.

But in a sieve<sup>1</sup> I'll thither sail,  
 And, like a rat without a tail.<sup>2</sup>  
 I'll do, I'll do, and I'll do.

10

*Sec. Witch.* I'll give thee a wind.

*First Witch.* Thou'rt kind.

*Third Witch.* And I another.

*First Witch.* I myself have all the other,  
 And the very ports they blow,  
 All the quarters that they know  
 I' the shipman's card.<sup>3</sup>

15

I will drain him dry as hay:  
 Sleep shall neither night nor day  
 Hang upon his pent-house lid;<sup>4</sup>  
 He shall live a man forbid:<sup>5</sup>

20

Weary se'nnights<sup>6</sup> nine times nine  
 Shall he dwindle, peak and pine:  
 Though his bark cannot be lost,<sup>7</sup>  
 Yet it shall be tempest-tost.

25

Look what I have.

*Sec. Witch.* Show me, show me.

*First Witch.* Here I have a pilot's thumb,  
 Wreck'd as homeward he did come. [*Drums within.*]

30

*Third Witch.* A drum, a drum!  
 Macbeth doth come.

*All.* The weird<sup>8</sup> sisters, hand in hand,

<sup>1</sup> **In a sieve**—It was believed that witches could do the impossible, i.e., go to sea in a sieve.

<sup>2</sup> **Without a tail**—As a devil is known by his cloven foot, so in the werewolf stories (no matter what animal form she assumed), the witch might be known by the absence of a tail.

<sup>3</sup> **Card**—Chart.

<sup>4</sup> **Pent-house lid**—Eyelid.

<sup>5</sup> **Forbid**—(Bid-pray)—Accursed or prayed against.

<sup>6</sup> **Se'nnights**—Seven nights (fortnight).

<sup>7</sup> **Though . . . lost**—The power of the Witches seems to have had limits.

<sup>8</sup> **Weird**—(Weyward is the folio reading.) They were supposed to control fate.

Posters <sup>1</sup> of the sea and land,  
 Thus do go about, about:  
 Thrice to thine and thrice to mine  
 And thrice again, to make up nine.  
 Peace! the charm's wound up.

35

*Enter MACBETH and BANQUO.*

*Macb.* So foul and fair a day I have not seen.<sup>2</sup>

*Ban.* How far is 't call'd to Forres<sup>3</sup>? What are these  
 So wither'd and so wild in their attire,  
 That look not like the inhabitants o' the earth,  
 And yet are on 't? Live you? or are you aught  
 That man may question?<sup>4</sup> You seem to understand me,  
 By each at once her chappy <sup>5</sup> finger laying  
 Upon her skinny lips: you should be women,  
 And yet your beards <sup>6</sup> forbid me to interpret  
 That you are so.

40

45

*Macb.* Speak, if you can: what are you?

*First Witch.* All hail, Macbeth! hail to thee, thane of Glamis!

*Sec. Witch.* All hail, Macbeth! hail to thee, thane of Cawdor.

*Third Witch.* All hail, Macbeth, that shalt be king hereafter!

50

*Ban.* Good sir, why do you start; and seem to fear  
 Things that do sound so fair? I' the name of truth,  
 Are ye fantastical,<sup>7</sup> or that indeed

<sup>1</sup> **Posters**—Speedy travellers.

<sup>2</sup> **So foul and fair a day**—The connection between Macbeth and the weird sisters is impressed upon us by his first words.

<sup>3</sup> **Forres**—A town about twenty-five miles from Inverness.

<sup>4</sup> **Question**—Converse with.

<sup>5</sup> **Chappy**—Chapped. Everything in the description points to the peculiar appearance of these creatures.

<sup>6</sup> **Beards**—Witches were bearded.

<sup>7</sup> **Fantastical**—Creatures of the fancy, imaginary.

Which outwardly ye show? <sup>1</sup> My noble partner  
 You greet with present grace and great prediction 55  
 Of noble having and of royal hope,<sup>2</sup>  
 That he seems wrapt withal: to me you speak not.  
 If you can look into the seeds of time,  
 And say which grain will grow and which will not,  
 Speak then to me, who neither beg nor fear 60  
 Your favours nor your hate.<sup>3</sup>

*First Witch.* Hail!

*Sec. Witch.* Hail!

*Third Witch.* Hail!

*First Witch.* Lesser than Macbeth, and greater. 65

*Sec. Witch.* Not so happy,<sup>4</sup> yet much happier.

*Third Witch.* Thou shalt get kings, though thou be  
 none: So all hail, Macbeth and Banquo!

*First Witch.* Banquo and Macbeth, all hail!

*Macb.* Stay, you imperfect speakers, tell me more: 70  
 By Sinel's <sup>5</sup> death I know I am thane of Glamis;  
 But how of Cawdor? the thane of Cawdor lives,  
 A prosperous gentleman;<sup>6</sup> and to be king  
 Stands not within the prospect of belief,  
 No more than to be Cawdor. Say from whence 75  
 You owe <sup>7</sup> this strange intelligence? or why

<sup>1</sup> **Show**—Appear.

<sup>2</sup> **Present grace** is his present title; **prediction of noble having** is the title thane of Cawdor, and **royal hope** is the prospect of kingship. These three correspond to the three "all hails." **Having**—Possession.

<sup>3</sup> **Who . . . hate**—Banquo shows his independent, innocent spirit. Beg favours and fear hate. Cross construction.

<sup>4</sup> **Happy**—Fortunate.

<sup>5</sup> **Sinel**—Macbeth's father.

<sup>6</sup> **A prosperous gentleman**—There seems to be a discrepancy here. We already know that the thane of Cawdor is a traitor. One explanation given is that Cawdor gave indirect aid and Macbeth may not have known this. However, the text may be corrupt or Shakespeare may have followed history here and may have forgotten that he altered it elsewhere.

<sup>7</sup> **Owe**—Have.

Upon this blasted heath you stop our way  
 With such prophetic greeting? Speak, I charge you.  
[Witches vanish.]

*Ban.* The earth hath bubbles, as the water has,  
 And these are of them. Whither are they vanish'd? <sup>80</sup>

*Macb.* Into the air; and what seem'd corporal melted  
 As breath into the wind. Would they had stay'd!

*Ban.* Were such things here as we do speak about?  
 Or have we eaten on the insane root <sup>1</sup>  
 That takes the reason prisoner? 85

*Macb.* Your children shall be kings.<sup>2</sup>

*Ban.* You shall be king.

*Macb.* And thane of Cawdor too: went it not so?

*Ban.* To the selfsame tune and words. Who's here?

*Enter Ross and ANGUS.*

*Ross.* The king hath happily received, Macbeth,  
 The news of thy success; and when he reads  
 Thy personal venture in the rebels' fight,<sup>3</sup> 90  
 His wonders and his praises do contend  
 Which should be thine or his:<sup>4</sup> silenced with that,  
 In viewing o'er the rest o' the selfsame day,  
 He finds thee in the stout Norweyan ranks, 95  
 Nothing afeard of what thyself didst make,  
 Strange images of death. As thick as hail  
 Came post with post; and every one did bear  
 Thy praises in his kingdom's great defence,  
 And pour'd them down before him.

<sup>1</sup> **The insane root**—Hemlock is used in the Witches' cauldron. Henbane also causes insanity. **Insane**—Making insane. Prolepsis.

<sup>2</sup> **Your children shall be kings**—We are prepared by this speech for Macbeth's future attitude towards Banquo.

<sup>3</sup> **Personal venture . . . fight**—Macbeth's hand to hand conflict with Macdonwald.

<sup>4</sup> **His wonders . . . thine or his**—His wonder at thy success and valour is so great that he finds it impossible to praise thee duly in words.

Ang. We are sent 100  
To give thee from our royal master thanks;  
Only to herald thee into his sight,  
Not pay thee.

Ross. And for an earnest <sup>1</sup> of a greater honour,  
He bade me, from him, call thee thane of Cawdor: 105  
In which addition,<sup>2</sup> hail, most worthy thane!  
For it is thine.

Ban. [*Aside.*] What, can the Devil <sup>3</sup> speak true?

Macb. Thethane of Cawdor lives: why do you dress me  
In borrow'd robes?

Ang. Who was the thane lives yet;  
But under heavy judgment bears that life 110  
Which he deserves to lose. Whether he was combined  
With those of Norway, or did line <sup>4</sup> the rebel  
With hidden help and vantage, or that with both  
He labour'd in his country's wreck, I know not; <sup>5</sup>  
But treasons capital, confess'd and proved, 115  
Have overthrown him.

Macb. [*Aside.*] Glamis, and thane of Cawdor!  
The greatest is behind. [*To Ross and Angus.*] Thanks  
for your pains.

[*To Ban.*] Do you not hope your children shall be kings,  
When those that gave the thane of Cawdor to me  
Promised no less to them?

Ban. That trusted home <sup>6</sup> 120  
Might yet enkindle you unto <sup>7</sup> the crown,

<sup>1</sup> **Earnest**—Foretaste or pledge.

<sup>2</sup> **Addition**—Title, added to his former one.

<sup>3</sup> **Devil**—The metre demands a monosyllable. It was probably pronounced "deel," as in Scotch.

<sup>4</sup> **Line**—Reinforce.

<sup>5</sup> **I know not**—This seems impossible, since Angus was present when the king heard of Cawdor's treachery. However, he may not know the details.

<sup>6</sup> **Trusted home**—Trusted entirely.

<sup>7</sup> **Enkindle you unto**—Incite you to work for.



Besides the thane of Cawdor. But 't is strange:  
 And oftentimes, to win us to our harm,  
 The instruments of darkness tell us truths,  
 Win us with honest trifles, to betray's 125  
 In deepest consequence.

Cousins, a word, I pray you.

*Macb.* [*Aside.*] Two truths are told,  
 As happy prologues to the swelling act  
 Of the imperial theme.—I thank you, gentlemen.  
[*Aside.*] This supernatural soliciting <sup>1</sup> 130  
 Cannot be ill, cannot be good: if ill,  
 Why hath it given me earnest of success,  
 Commencing in a truth? I'm thane of Cawdor:  
 If good, why do I yield to that suggestion  
 Whose horrid image doth unfix my hair 135  
 And make my seated heart knock at my ribs,  
 Against the use of nature? <sup>2</sup> Present fears  
 Are less than horrible imaginings:  
 My thought, whose murder yet is but fantastical,  
 Shakes so my single <sup>3</sup> state of man that function <sup>4</sup> 140  
 Is smother'd in surmise, and nothing is  
 But what is not.

*Ban.* Look, how our partner's rapt.

*Macb.* [*Aside.*] If chance will have me king, why,  
 chance may crown me,  
 Without my stir.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **Soliciting**—Incitement.

<sup>2</sup> **Suggestion . . . nature**—We are quite plainly told in this speech that the temptation was to use means so terrible that the very thought made his hair stand on end and his heart beat strangely. **Seated**—Firmly placed.

<sup>3</sup> **Single**—Weak.

<sup>4</sup> **Function**—Ability to act. The thought of this murder exercises such a powerful influence over Macbeth that the present for him is lost in the future. He, for the time being, is not Macbeth, and the only real thing to him is that which does not exist.

<sup>5</sup> **Without my stir**—Without action on my part.

*Ban.* New honours come upon him,  
Like our strange<sup>1</sup> garments, cleave not to their mould  
But with the aid of use.<sup>2</sup> 146

*Macb.* [*Aside.*] Come what come may,  
Time and the hour runs through the roughest day.<sup>3</sup>

*Ban.* Worthy Macbeth, we stay upon your leisure.

*Macb.* Give me your favour: my dull brain was  
wrought  
With things forgotten. Kind gentlemen, your pains<sup>150</sup>  
Are register'd<sup>4</sup> where every day I turn  
The leaf to read them. Let us toward the king.  
Think upon what hath chanced, and, at more time,  
The interim having weigh'd it, let us speak  
Our free hearts each to other.

*Ban.* Very gladly. 155

*Macb.* Till then, enough. Come, friends. [*Exeunt.*]

#### SCENE IV. *Forres. The palace.*

*Flourish.* Enter DUNCAN, MALCOLM, DONALBAIN,  
LENNOX and Attendants.

*Dun.* Is execution done on Cawdor? Are not  
Those in commission<sup>5</sup> yet return'd?

*Mal.* My liege,  
They are not yet come back. But I have spoke  
With one that saw him die: who did report  
That very frankly he confess'd his treasons,  
Implored your highness' pardon and set forth 5  
A deep repentance: nothing in his life  
Became him like the leaving it; he died

<sup>1</sup> **Strange**—New.

<sup>2</sup> **Cleave . . use**—They do not fit well until worn for a time.

<sup>3</sup> **Time and the hour . . . day**—What is to be will be, no matter what difficulties are encountered.

<sup>4</sup> **Register'd**—Written in his memory.

<sup>5</sup> **In commission**—Entrusted with this errand.

As one that had been studièd <sup>1</sup> in his death  
To throw away the dearest thing he owed, 10  
As 't were a careless <sup>2</sup> trifle.

*Dun.*   There's no art  
To find the mind's construction in the face:  
He was a gentleman on whom I built  
An absolute trust.

*Enter* MACBETH, BANQUO, ROSS, *and* ANGUS.

O worthiest cousin!  
The sin of my ingratitude even now  
Was heavy on me: thou art so far before  
That swiftest wing of recompense is slow  
To overtake thee. Would thou hadst less deserved,  
That the proportion<sup>3</sup> both of thanks and payment  
Might have been mine! only I have left to say,  
More is thy due than more than all can pay.

*Macb.* The service and the loyalty I owe,  
In doing it, pays itself.<sup>4</sup> Your highness' part  
Is to receive our duties; and our duties  
Are to your throne and state children and servants, <sup>25</sup>  
Which do but what they should, by doing everything  
Safe toward your love and honour.<sup>5</sup>

*Dun.* Welcome hither:  
I have begun to plant thee, and will labour

<sup>1</sup> **Had been studied**—Had made it his study to act thus at his death.

<sup>2</sup> **Careless**—Little esteemed.

This description of Cawdor's death is supposed by some to have been suggested by that of the Earl of Essex, which took place under similar circumstances.

<sup>3</sup> **Proportion**—Observe that he wishes rather to make the payment greater than Macbeth deserves.

<sup>4</sup> **The service . . . itself**—The loyalty that he claims is due to his king makes him feel richly repaid when he finds an opportunity to show it.

<sup>5</sup> **Safe toward . . . honour**—Which will surely not be lacking in love and honour toward you.

To make thee full of growing. Noble Banquo,  
 That hast no less deserved, nor must be known 30  
 No less to have done so, let me infold thee  
 And hold thee to my heart.

*Ban.* There if I grow,  
 The harvest is your own.

*Dun.* My plenteous joys,  
 Wanton<sup>1</sup> in fulness, seek to hide themselves  
 In drops of sorrow. Sons, kinsmen, thanes, 35  
 And you whose places are the nearest, know  
 We will establish our estate upon  
 Our eldest, Malcolm, whom we name hereafter  
 The Prince of Cumberland;<sup>2</sup> which honour must  
 Not unaccompanied invest him only, 40  
 But signs of nobleness, like stars, shall shine  
 On all deservers. From hence to Inverness,  
 And bind us further to you.<sup>3</sup>

*Macb.* The rest is labour, which is not used for you:<sup>4</sup>  
 I'll be myself the harbinger<sup>5</sup> and make joyful 45  
 The hearing of my wife with your approach;  
 So humbly take my leave.

*Dun.* My worthy Cawdor!

*Macb.* [*Aside.*] The Prince of Cumberland! that is a  
 step  
 On which I must fall down, or else o'erleap,

<sup>1</sup> **Wanton**—Unrestrained. His too great joy finds expression in tears, which are usually a mark of grief.

<sup>2</sup> **We will . . . Cumberland**—Kingship then was not hereditary and according to Holinshed, if the king named his successor, he was called Prince of Cumberland. This takes away Macbeth's hope and hastens the murder, as does the visit of the king to Inverness.

<sup>3</sup> **Bind . . . you**—By extending the hospitality of your home of Inverness to us.

<sup>4</sup> **The rest is labour . . . you**—The hours not spent in his king's service were like labour to him.

<sup>5</sup> **Harbinger**—One who is sent ahead to secure lodgings for the king.

For in my way it lies. Stars, hide your fires;  
 Let not light see my black and deep desires:  
 The eye wink at the hand; yet let that be,  
 Which the eye fears, when it is done, to see.<sup>1</sup> [Exit.

*Dun.* True, worthy Banquo; he is full so valiant,  
 And in his commendations I am fed;  
 It is a banquet to me.<sup>2</sup> Let's after him,  
 Whose care is gone before to bid us welcome:  
 It is a peerless kinsman. [Flourish. Exeunt.

SCENE V. *Inverness. Macbeth's castle.*

*Enter LADY MACBETH, reading a letter.*

*Lady M.* "They met me in the day of success: and I have learned by the perfectest report,<sup>3</sup> they have more in them than mortal knowledge. When I burned in desire to question them further, they made themselves air, into which they vanished. Whiles I stood rapt in the wonder of it, came missives from the king, who all-hailed me 'Thane of Cawdor;' by which title, before, these weird sisters saluted me, and referred me to the coming on of time,<sup>4</sup> with 'Hail, king that shalt be!' This have I thought good to deliver thee,<sup>5</sup> my dearest partner of greatness, that thou mightst not lose the dues of rejoicing, by being ignorant of what greatness is promised thee. Lay it to thy heart, and farewell."

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<sup>1</sup> **Stars, hide your fires, etc.**—Macbeth is contemplating a crime so terrible that only a starless night would be suitable for its perpetration and the eye would close so that it might not see what the hand did.

<sup>2</sup> **True worthy Banquo . . . me**—Shakespeare's dramatic power is most evident in the contrast shown here. Macbeth's revelation of his intended crime is followed by Duncan's speech showing entire trust and noble admiration.

<sup>3</sup> **Perfectest report**—His own experience. He is already thane of Cawdor.

<sup>4</sup> **Coming on of time**—The future.

<sup>5</sup> **Deliver thee**—Report to thee.

Glamis thou art, and Cawdor; and shalt be  
 What thou art promised: yet do I fear thy nature;  
 It is too full o' the milk of human kindness<sup>1</sup>  
 To catch the nearest way: thou wouldst be great;  
 Art not without ambition, but without  
 The illness<sup>2</sup> should attend it: what thou wouldst highly,  
 That wouldst thou holily; wouldst not play false,<sup>21</sup>  
 And yet wouldst wrongly win: thou'dst have, great  
     Glamis,  
 That which cries "Thus thou must do, if thou have it;"  
 And that which rather thou dost fear to do  
 Than wishest should be undone. Hie thee hither,  
 That I may pour my spirits in thine ear;<sup>26</sup>  
 And chastise with the valour of my tongue  
 All that impedes thee from the golden round,<sup>3</sup>  
 Which fate and metaphysical<sup>4</sup> aid doth seem  
 To have thee crown'd withal.

*Enter a Messenger.*

What is your tidings?<sup>30</sup>

*Mess.* The king comes here to-night.

*Lady M.* Thou'rt mad to say it.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **Milk of human kindness, etc.**—The interpretation of this speech depends entirely upon our conception of Macbeth's character and his wife's. Many and varied explanations are given. Professor Moulton interprets "milk of human kindness" as the natural tendency of human nature, or that absence of hardness which makes Macbeth, as well as others, shrink from what is unnatural. He is a criminal at heart but shrinks from the unconventional. How easy it is for him when he has once begun! Note the after effect upon Lady Macbeth.

<sup>2</sup> **Illness**—The opposite of human kindness.

<sup>3</sup> **The golden round**—The crown.

<sup>4</sup> **Metaphysical**—Supernatural.

<sup>5</sup> **Thou'rt mad to say it**—This is dramatically natural. Lady Macbeth is almost overcome when she realizes how soon the deed may be done and we can imagine that it is only with great effort that she conceals her feelings in the rest of the speech.



Is not thy master with him? who, were 't so,  
Would have inform'd for preparation.

*Mess.* So please you, it is true: our thane is coming:  
One of my fellows had the speed of him,<sup>1</sup>  
Who, almost dead for breath, had scarcely more  
Than would make up his message.

*Lady M.* Give him tending<sup>2</sup>;  
He brings great news. [*Exit Messenger.*]

The raven himself is hoarse<sup>3</sup>  
That croaks the fatal<sup>4</sup> entrance of Duncan  
Under my battlements. Come, you spirits  
That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here,  
And fill me from the crown to the toe top-full  
Of direst cruelty! make thick my blood;  
Stop up the access and passage to remorse,  
That no compunctious visitings of nature  
Shake my fell purpose, nor keep peace between  
The effect and it! Come to my woman's breasts,  
And take<sup>5</sup> my milk for gall, you murdering ministers,  
Wherever in your sightless substances<sup>6</sup>  
You wait on nature's mischief! Come, thick night.<sup>50</sup>  
And pall thee in the dunnest smoke of hell,  
That my keen knife see not the wound it makes,  
Nor heaven peep through the blanket of the dark,  
To cry "Hold, hold!"

*Enter MACBETH.*

Great Glamis! worthy Cawdor!

<sup>1</sup> **Had the speed of him**—Outstripped him.

<sup>2</sup> **Tending**—Attendance or care.

<sup>3</sup> **The raven is hoarse**—The messenger is breathless and the raven, a bird of ill-omen, who would croak the entrance of Duncan, would grow hoarse in proclaiming his fate.

<sup>4</sup> **Fatal**—It meant death to Duncan. The thought of fate in connection with the prophecy of the Witches gives the word an added force.

<sup>5</sup> **Take for**—Turn into.

<sup>6</sup> **Sightless substances**—Invisible forms.

Greater than both, by the all-hail hereafter!<sup>1</sup>  
 Thy letters have transported me beyond  
 This ignorant<sup>2</sup> present, and I feel now  
 The future in the instant.

55

*Macb.* My dearest love,  
 Duncan comes here to-night.

*Lady M.* And when goes hence?

*Macb.* To-morrow, as he purposes.

*Lady M.* O, never 60

Shall sun that morrow see!  
 Your face, my thane, is as a book where men  
 May read strange matters. To beguile the time,  
 Look like the time;<sup>3</sup> bear welcome in your eye,  
 Your hand, your tongue: look like the innocent flower,  
 But be the serpent under 't. He that's coming 66  
 Must be provided for: and you shall put  
 This night's great business into my dispatch;  
 Which shall to all our nights and days to come  
 Give solely sovereign sway and masterdom. 70

*Macb.* We will speak further.

*Lady M.* Only look up clear<sup>4</sup>;  
 To alter favour ever is to fear:<sup>5</sup>  
 Leave all the rest to me. [Exeunt.

---

<sup>1</sup> **Hereafter**—Future. The absorbing thought in both their minds is the only one which finds expression.

<sup>2</sup> **Ignorant**—Unknowing. In imagination she now lives in that future which, however, the present, as it is, cannot know or realize.

<sup>3</sup> **To beguile . . . time**—To deceive men, be like what they are accustomed to see.

<sup>4</sup> **Clear**—Frankly or openly.

<sup>5</sup> **To alter favour . . . fear**—To change countenance is a sign of fear.

SCENE VI. *Before Macbeth's castle.*

*Hautboys and torches. Enter DUNCAN, MALCOLM, DONALBAIN, BANQUO, LENNOX, MACDUFF, ROSS, ANGUS, and Attendants.*

*Dun.* This castle hath a pleasant seat; the air  
Nimbly and sweetly recommends itself  
Unto our gentle senses.<sup>1</sup>

*Ban.* This guest of summer,  
The temple-haunting martlet,<sup>2</sup> does approve,  
By his loved mansionry,<sup>3</sup> that the heaven's breath 5  
Smells wooingly here; no jutty, frieze,  
Buttress, nor coign of vantage,<sup>4</sup> but this bird  
Hath made his pendent bed<sup>5</sup> and procreant cradle:<sup>6</sup>  
Where they most breed and haunt, I have observed,  
The air is delicate.

*Enter LADY MACBETH.*

*Dun.* See, see, our honour'd hostess! 10  
The love that follows us sometimes is our trouble,  
Which still we thank as love. Herein I teach you  
How you shall bid God 'ild us<sup>7</sup> for your pains,

<sup>1</sup> **Gentle senses, etc.**—The gentle, balmy air gives a feeling of calm delight.

This scene shows that Shakespeare was the master of dramatic contrast. Only a moment ago the thought of a terrible crime was vividly before our minds and now we have a perfect picture of repose. A sense of security pervades everything, but this only serves to emphasize the horrors that follow.

<sup>2</sup> **Temple-haunting martlet**—A bird found in England in summer. It builds beneath the eaves of houses and churches, in peaceful places.

<sup>3</sup> **Mansionry**—Masonry, nest or abode.

<sup>4</sup> **Coign of vantage**—Suitable or convenient corner.

<sup>5</sup> **Pendent bed**—Hanging nest.

<sup>6</sup> **Procreant cradle**—Future home of the young birds.

<sup>7</sup> **God 'ild us**—They are to pray that their king may be blessed because this trouble that he gives them is the result of his love towards them.

And thank us for your trouble.

*Lady M.* All our service  
In every point twice done and then done double 15  
Were poor and single <sup>1</sup> business to contend  
Against those honours deep and broad wherewith  
Your majesty loads our house: for those of old,  
And the late dignities heap'd up to them,<sup>2</sup>  
We rest your hermits.<sup>3</sup>

*Dun.* Where 's the thane of Cawdor? <sup>20</sup>  
We coursed <sup>4</sup> him at the heels, and had a purpose  
To be his purveyor: <sup>5</sup> but he rides well;  
And his great love, sharp as his spur, hath holp him  
To his home before us. Fair and noble hostess,  
We are your guest to-night.

*Lady M.* Your servants ever 25  
Have theirs, themselves and what is theirs, in compt,  
To make their audit at your highness' pleasure,  
Still to return your own.<sup>6</sup>

*Dun.* Give me your hand;  
Conduct me to mine host: we love him highly,  
And shall continue our graces towards him. 30  
By your leave,<sup>7</sup> hostess. [Exeunt.]

<sup>1</sup> **Single**—Small. (In contrast with "double.")

<sup>2</sup> **To them**—In addition to them.

<sup>3</sup> **We rest your hermits**—We shall pray for you as beads-men or hermits do.

<sup>4</sup> **Coursed**—Chased.

<sup>5</sup> **Purveyor**—The king meant to arrive before Macbeth, and, like a purveyor to a king, meant to provide food and reception for him.

<sup>6</sup> **Have theirs . . . own**—They hold in trust all that is accounted theirs, only to return it to their king when he shall be pleased to demand it.

<sup>7</sup> **By your leave**—He asks courteous permission to conduct her into the castle.

SCENE VII. *Macbeth's Castle.*

*Hautboys and torches. Enter a Sewer,<sup>1</sup> and divers Servants with dishes and service, and pass over the stage. Then enter MACBETH.*

*Macb.* If it were done when 't is done, then 't were well  
It were done quickly: <sup>2</sup> if the assassination  
Could trammel up <sup>3</sup> the consequence, and catch  
With his surcease <sup>4</sup> success; that but this blow  
Might be the be-all and the end-all here, 5  
But here, upon this bank and shoal <sup>5</sup> of time,  
We'd jump the life to come. <sup>6</sup> But in these cases  
We still have judgment here; that we but teach  
Bloody instructions, which, being taught, return  
To plague the inventor: this even-handed justice 10  
Commends <sup>7</sup> the ingredients of our poison'd chalice  
To our own lips. He's here in double trust;  
First, as I am his kinsman and his subject,  
Strong both against the deed: then, as his host,  
Who should against his murderer shut the door, 15  
Not bear the knife myself. Besides, this Duncan  
Hath borne his faculties <sup>8</sup> so meek, hath been  
So clear <sup>9</sup> in his great office, that his virtues

---

<sup>1</sup> **Sewer**—Originally meant one who tasted food to protect against poison, and then a head groom of the kitchen.

<sup>2</sup> **If . . . quickly**—If the murder could bring about the end desired, then he would not delay.

<sup>3</sup> **Trammel up**—Entangle as in a net. The noun "trammel" meant a net.

<sup>4</sup> **Surcease**—End.

<sup>5</sup> **Shoal**—Shallow river of life compared with the depths of eternity.

<sup>6</sup> **If the assassination . . . come**—If the murder were followed by no consequences and, that being accomplished, he would be successful in this life, then he would willingly take chances in the life beyond.

<sup>7</sup> **Commends**—Offers.

<sup>8</sup> **Faculties**—Kingly prerogatives

<sup>9</sup> **Clear**—Guiltless.

Will plead like angels, trumpet-tongued, against  
 The deep damnation of his taking-off; 20  
 And pity, like a naked new-born babe,  
 Striding the blast, or heaven's cherubin, horsed  
 Upon the sightless couriers of the air,<sup>1</sup>  
 Shall blow the horrid deed in every eye,  
 That tears shall drown the wind.<sup>2</sup> I have no spur 25  
 To prick the sides of my intent but only  
 Vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself  
 And falls on the other.<sup>3</sup>

*Enter LADY MACBETH.*

How now! what news?

*Lady M.* He has almost supp'd: why have you left  
 the chamber?

*Macb.* Hath he ask'd for me?

*Lady M.* Know you not he has?<sup>30</sup>

*Macb.* We will proceed no further in this business:  
 He hath honour'd me of late; and I have bought  
 Golden opinions from all sorts of people,  
 Which would be worn now in their newest gloss,  
 Not cast aside so soon.

*Lady M.* Was the hope drunk 35  
 Wherein you dress'd yourself? hath it slept since?  
 And wakes it now, to look so green and pale<sup>4</sup>  
 At what it did so freely? From this time  
 Such I account thy love. Art thou afeard  
 To be the same in thine own act and valour 40

<sup>1</sup> **Sightless couriers of the air**—The winds.

<sup>2</sup> **That tears . . . wind**—Just as rain is followed by a lull in the storm.

<sup>3</sup> **I have no spur . . . other**—Two metaphors. The rider who needs a spur is compared to Macbeth without ambition. Macbeth's ambition urges him to do a deed which may ruin him by carrying him too far, just as the rider, springing to the saddle, may leap too far and fall on the other side of his horse.

<sup>4</sup> **Green and pale**—Suggestive of Macbeth's cowardice, which his wife knows.



As thou art in desire? Wouldst thou have that  
Which thou esteem'st the ornament of life,<sup>1</sup>  
And live a coward in thine own esteem,  
Letting "I dare not" wait upon "I would,"  
Like the poor cat i' the adage?<sup>2</sup>

*Macb.* Prithee, peace: 45

I dare do all that may become a man;  
Who dares do more is none.

*Lady M.* What beast<sup>3</sup> was't, then,  
That made you break this enterprise to me?  
When you durst do it, then you were a man;  
And, to be more than what you were, you would 50  
Be so much more the man. Nor time nor place  
Did then adhere,<sup>4</sup> and yet you would make both:  
They have made themselves, and that their fitness<sup>5</sup> now  
Does unmake you. I have given suck, and know  
How tender 't is to love the babe that milks me: 55  
I would, while it was smiling in my face,  
Have pluck'd my nipple from his boneless gums,  
And dash'd the brains out, had I so sworn as you  
Have done to this.<sup>6</sup>

*Macb.* If we should fail?

*Lady M.* We fail! 60

But screw your courage to the sticking-place,  
And we'll not fail. When Duncan is asleep —  
Whereto the rather shall his day's hard journey

<sup>1</sup> **Ornament of life**—The crown.

<sup>2</sup> **Like the poor cat i' the adage**—The cat desired the fish, but would not wet her feet.

<sup>3</sup> **Beast**—In contrast with the word "man" used by Macbeth.

<sup>4</sup> **Adhere**—A time and place had not been found to make the murder possible.

<sup>5</sup> **That their fitness**—Their very fitness.

<sup>6</sup> **I have given . . . this**—The dramatic power of this speech impresses upon us the fact that Lady Macbeth has determined that Macbeth shall be what he desires to be and her daring speech is meant to arouse him so that there may be no failure.

Soundly invite him — his two chamberlains  
 Will I with wine and wassail <sup>1</sup> so convince  
 That memory, the warder of the brain, 65  
 Shall be a fume, and the receipt <sup>2</sup> of reason  
 A limbeck <sup>3</sup> only: when in swinish sleep  
 Their drenched natures lie as in a death,  
 What cannot you and I perform upon  
 The unguarded Duncan? what not put upon 70  
 His spongy <sup>4</sup> officers, who shall bear the guilt  
 Of our great quell? <sup>5</sup>

*Macb.* Bring forth men-children only;  
 For thy undaunted mettle should compose  
 Nothing but males. Will it not be received,  
 When we have mark'd with blood those sleepy two 75  
 Of his own chamber and used their very daggers,  
 That they have done 't?

*Lady M.* Who dares receive it other,  
 As we shall make our griefs and clamour roar  
 Upon his death?

*Macb.* I am settled, and bend up <sup>6</sup>  
 Each corporal agent <sup>7</sup> to this terrible feat. 80  
 Away, and mock the time with fairest show:  
 False face must hide what the false heart doth know.  
[*Exeunt.*

<sup>1</sup> **Wassail**—Revelry.

<sup>2</sup> **Receipt**—Receptacle.

<sup>3</sup> **Limbeck**—Alembic. The two chamberlains shall be so overcome by liquor that memory shall be confused and they shall be incapable and irresponsible.

<sup>4</sup> **Spongy**—Capable of partaking of much liquor.

<sup>5</sup> **Quell**—Murder.

<sup>6</sup> **Bend up**—Strain to its utmost tension.

<sup>7</sup> **Corporal agent**—Bodily power.

## ACT II.

SCENE I. *Court of Macbeth's castle.*

*Enter BANQUO, and FLEANCE bearing a torch before him.*

*Ban.* How goes the night, boy?

*Fle.* The moon is down; I have not heard the clock.

*Ban.* And she goes down at twelve.

*Fle.* I take 't, 't is later, sir.

*Ban.* Hold, take my sword.<sup>1</sup> There's husbandry<sup>2</sup> in heaven;

Their candles are all out. Take thee that<sup>3</sup> too. 5

A heavy summons lies like lead upon me,  
And yet I would not sleep: merciful powers,  
Restrain in me the cursed thoughts that nature  
Gives way to in repose!<sup>4</sup>

*Enter MACBETH, and a Servant with a torch.*

Give me my sword.

Who's there? 10

*Macb.* A friend.

*Ban.* What, sir, not yet at rest? The king's a-bed:  
He hath been in unusual pleasure, and  
Sent forth great largess to your offices.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **Hold, take my sword**—The night gloom and the sense of insecurity and treachery which no doubt impressed itself upon Banquo after all that had happened, is well expressed in this speech. He wishes to believe in Macbeth nevertheless; and, to argue himself into confidence, he leaves himself unprotected by handing his sword to Fleance.

<sup>2</sup> **Husbandry**—Economy.

<sup>3</sup> **That**—Perhaps a dagger.

<sup>4</sup> **Restrain . . . repose**—Banquo prays that even in sleep when the will is in abeyance, he may be protected from evil thoughts.

<sup>5</sup> **Offices**—Servants' quarters. Some texts have "officers "

This diamond he greets your wife withal, 15  
 By the name of most kind hostess; and shut up  
 In measureless content.<sup>1</sup>

*Macb.* Being unprepared.  
 Our will became the servant to defect;<sup>2</sup>  
 Which else should free have wrought.

*Ban.* All's well.  
 I dreamt last night of the three weird sisters: 20  
 To you they have show'd some truth.

*Macb.* I think not of them:  
 Yet, when we can entreat an hour to serve,  
 We would spend it in some words upon that business,<sup>3</sup>  
 If you would grant the time.

*Ban.* At your kind'st leisure.

*Macb.* If you shall cleave to my consent,<sup>4</sup> when 't is,  
 It shall make honour for you.

*Ban.* So I lose none 25  
 In seeking to augment it, but still keep  
 My bosom franchised<sup>5</sup> and allegiance clear,  
 I shall be counsell'd.

*Macb.* Good repose the while!

*Ban.* Thanks, sir: the like to you! 30

[*Exeunt Banquo and Fleance.*]

*Macb.* Go bid thy mistress, when my drink<sup>6</sup> is ready,

<sup>1</sup> **Shut . . . content**—Concluded with expressions of unbounded satisfaction.

<sup>2</sup> **Our will . . . defect**—Not having time for ample preparation this was defective, although they would have wished it to be otherwise.

<sup>3</sup> **When . . . business**—When it is possible for you, we would ask you to grant us an hour's interview concerning this matter.

<sup>4</sup> **Consent**—Plan. This is obscure, and is thought by some to have read "consort," meaning "party."

<sup>5</sup> **Franchised**—Free.

<sup>6</sup> **My drink**—This was customary and not prepared for the occasion.

She strike upon the bell. Get thee to bed.

[*Exit Servant.*]

Is this a dagger which I see before me,  
The handle toward my hand? Come, let me clutch  
thee.

I have thee not and yet I see thee still. 35

Art thou not, fatal vision, sensible<sup>1</sup>

To feeling as to sight? or art thou but

A dagger of the mind, a false creation,

Proceeding from the heat-oppressed<sup>2</sup> brain?

I see thee yet, in form as palpable 40

As this which now I draw.

Thou marshall'st me the way that I was going;

And such an instrument I was to use.

Mine eyes are made the fools o' the other senses,<sup>3</sup>

Or else worth all the rest; I see thee still, 45

And on thy blade and dudgeon<sup>4</sup> gouts<sup>5</sup> of blood,

Which was not so before. There's no such thing:

It is the bloody business which informs

Thus to mine eyes.<sup>6</sup> Now o'er the one half-world

Nature seems dead, and wicked dreams abuse 50

The curtained sleep<sup>7</sup>; witchcraft celebrates

Pale Hecate's sufferings,<sup>8</sup> and wither'd murder,

Alarum'd by his sentinel, the wolf,

Whose howl's his watch,<sup>9</sup> thus with his stealthy pace,

---

<sup>1</sup> **Sensible**—Perceptible.

<sup>2</sup> **Heat-oppressed**—Excited by terrible fancies.

<sup>3</sup> **Mine eyes . . . senses**—Either his eyes or his other senses are playing him false.

<sup>4</sup> **Dudgeon**—Handle.

<sup>5</sup> **Gouts**—Drops.

<sup>6</sup> **It is . . . eyes**—It is because he is contemplating murder that he sees this.

<sup>7</sup> **Sleep**—Some texts give 'sleeper.'

<sup>8</sup> **Witchcraft . . . sufferings**—Witches perform their worst deeds, those most pleasing to Hecate, their queen.

<sup>9</sup> **Whose howl's his watch**—Who marks the different watches or divisions of the night by his howlings.

With Tarquin's ravishing <sup>1</sup> strides, towards his design<sup>55</sup>  
 Moves like a ghost. Thou sure and firm-set earth,  
 Hear not my steps, which way they walk, for fear  
 Thy very stones prate of my whereabouts,  
 And take the present horror from the time,  
 Which now suits with it.<sup>2</sup> Whiles I threat, he lives:<sup>60</sup>  
 Words to the heat of deeds too cold breath gives.

[*A bell rings.*

I go, and it is done; the bell invites me.  
 Hear it not, Duncan; for it is a knell  
 That summons thee to heaven or to hell.

[*Exit.*

SCENE II. *The same.*

*Enter LADY MACBETH.*

*Lady M.* That which hath made them drunk hath  
 made me bold;<sup>3</sup>  
 What hath quench'd them hath given me fire. Hark!  
 Peace!  
 It was the owl <sup>4</sup> that shriek'd, the fatal bellman,<sup>5</sup>  
 Which gives the stern'st good-night. He is about it:  
 The doors are open; and the surfeited grooms <sup>5</sup>  
 Do mock their charge with snores: I have drugg'd  
 their possets,<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **Ravishing**—Transferred epithet. Tarquin was the ravisher.

<sup>2</sup> **Take . . . it**—The darkness of the night and his own terrible fancies add a fitting terror to the time and circumstances, from which, however, he would wish to be free.

<sup>3</sup> **That . . . bold**—The wine had stimulated Lady Macbeth; the drugged wine had overpowered the guards.

<sup>4</sup> **Owl**—A bird of ill-omen.

<sup>5</sup> **The fatal bellman**—The night-watch who calls out the hours in this case is the hooting owl, which, to Lady Macbeth, foretells death to Duncan.

<sup>6</sup> **Possets**—Drink.



That death and nature do contend about them,  
Whether they live or die.

*Enter MACBETH above, for a moment.*

*Macb.* Who's there? what, ho!

*Lady M.* Alack, I am afraid they have awaked, <sup>10</sup>  
And 't is not done. The attempt, and not the deed,  
Confounds us.<sup>1</sup> Hark! I laid their daggers ready;  
He could not miss 'em. Had he not resembled  
My father as he slept, I had done 't.<sup>2</sup>

*Enter MACBETH.*

My husband!

*Macb.* I have done the deed. Didst thou not hear  
a noise? <sup>15</sup>

*Lady M.* I heard the owl scream and the crickets cry.  
Did not you speak?

*Macb.* When?

*Lady M.* Now!

*Macb.* As I descended?

*Lady M.* Ay!

*Macb.* Hark!

Who lies i' the second chamber?

*Lady M.* Donalbain. <sup>20</sup>

*Macb.* This is a sorry sight. [*Looking on his hands.*]

*Lady M.* A foolish thought, to say a sorry sight.

*Macb.* There's one did laugh in's sleep, and one  
cried "Murder!"

That they did wake each other: I stood and heard  
them:

But they did say their prayers, and address'd them <sup>3 25</sup>  
Again to sleep.

<sup>1</sup> **The attempt . . . us**—It would mean ruin to them if they failed in their attempt to do this deed.

<sup>2</sup> **Had he . . . it**—The gentler nature of Lady Macbeth, which she has determined to overcome, is all powerful in spite of her bold and apparently pitiless words.

<sup>3</sup> **Address'd them**—Prepared themselves.

*Lady M.* There are two lodged together.

*Macb.* One cried "God bless us!" and "Amen" the other;

As they had seen me with these hangman's<sup>1</sup> hands.

Listening their fear, I could not say "Amen,"

When they did say "God bless us!"

*Lady M.* Consider it not so deeply.<sup>2</sup> 30

*Macb.* But wherefore<sup>3</sup> could not I pronounce "Amen"?  
I had most need of blessing, and "Amen"  
Stuck in my throat.

*Lady M.* These deeds must not be thought  
After these ways; so, it will make us mad.<sup>4</sup>

*Macb.* Methought I heard a voice cry "Sleep no more!"<sup>5</sup>  
Macbeth does murder sleep," the innocent sleep, 36  
Sleep that knits up the ravell'd<sup>6</sup> sleeve<sup>7</sup> of care,  
The death of each day's life, sore labour's bath,  
Balm of hurt minds, great nature's second course,<sup>8</sup>  
Chief nourisher in life's feast,—

*Lady M.* What do you mean? 40

*Macb.* Still it cried "Sleep no more!" to all the house:  
"Glamis<sup>9</sup> hath murder'd sleep, and therefore Cawdor

<sup>1</sup> **Hangman's**—Executioner's.

<sup>2</sup> **Consider . . . deeply**—Lady Macbeth tries to calm her husband.

<sup>3</sup> **But wherefore, etc.**—Macbeth, in his hypocrisy, does not seem to realize that one should not pray for protection when he has attacked the unprotected.

<sup>4</sup> **So, it will make us mad**—We are prepared for what happens to Lady Macbeth afterwards. Lady Macbeth's nature (in spite of her iron will) did not permit her to take part in such a crime without fatal results to herself. She has carried it too far and the tensely strung cord breaks.

<sup>5</sup> **Sleep no more**—Macbeth had murdered the innocent Duncan as he slept, and, accordingly, his life thenceforth was insecure at all times.

<sup>6</sup> **Ravell'd**—Tangled.

<sup>7</sup> **Sleeve**—Soft silk used for weaving.

<sup>8</sup> **Second course**—The best course at a feast.

<sup>9</sup> **Glamis . . . more**—Macbeth shall not enjoy sleep under any title.

Shall sleep no more; Macbeth shall sleep no more.'"

*Lady M.* Who was it that thus cried? Why, worthy  
thane,

You do unbend your noble strength, to think 45  
So brainsickly <sup>1</sup> of things. Go get some water,  
And wash this filthy witness from your hand.  
Why did you bring these daggers from the place?  
They must lie there: go carry them; and smear  
The sleepy grooms with blood.

*Macb.* 50 I'll go no more:

I am afraid to think what I have done;  
Look on't again I dare not.

*Lady M.* Infirm of purpose!  
Give me the daggers: the sleeping and the dead  
Are but as pictures: 't is the eye of childhood  
That fears a painted devil. If he do bleed, 55  
I'll gild <sup>2</sup> the faces of the grooms withal;  
For it must seem their guilt. [*Exit. Knocking within.*

*Mac.* Whence is that knocking? <sup>3</sup>  
How is't with me, when every noise appals me?  
What hands are here? ha! they pluck out mine eyes.  
Will all great Neptune's <sup>4</sup> ocean wash this blood 60  
Clean from my hand? No, this my hand will rather  
The multitudinous seas incarnadine,  
Making the green one red. <sup>5</sup>

*Re-enter LADY MACBETH.*

*Lady M.* My hands are of your colour; but I shame

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<sup>1</sup> **Brainsickly**—Madly.

<sup>2</sup> **I'll gild, etc.**—"To gild with blood" was a common expression.

<sup>3</sup> **Knocking**—Macduff and Lennox were knocking.

<sup>4</sup> **Neptune**—God of the sea.

<sup>5</sup> **The multitudinous . . . red**—His hand is so bloody that it will completely redden the green waters of the many-waved sea. "Multitudinous" in sound is well chosen to imitate the rolling sea.

To wear a heart so white. [*Knocking within.*] I hear a  
knocking 65

At the south entry: retire we to our chamber:

A little water clears us of this deed:

How easy is it, then! Your constancy

Hath left you unattended.<sup>1</sup> [*Knocking within.*] Hark!  
more knocking.

Get on your nightgown, lest occasion call us,<sup>2</sup> 70

And show us to be watchers. Be not lost

So poorly in your thoughts.

*Macb.* To know my deed,<sup>3</sup> 't were best not know  
myself. [*Knocking within.*

Wake Duncan with thy knocking! I would thou  
couldst! [*Exeunt.*

### SCENE III. . *The same.*

*Knocking within.* Enter a Porter.

*Porter.* Here's a knocking indeed! If a man were  
porter of hell-gate, he should have old turning the key.  
[*Knocking within.*] Knock, knock, knock! Who's  
there, i' the name of Beelzebub? Here's a farmer,  
that hanged himself on the expectation of plenty:<sup>4</sup>  
come in time; have napkins enow about you; here

<sup>1</sup> **Your . . . unattended**—Your firmness has forsaken you.

<sup>2</sup> **Lest occasion call us**—Lest we should be required at any moment.

<sup>3</sup> **To know my deed**—If I must always be conscious of my deed.

This porter scene is criticised by many who try to prove that it is not Shakespeare's work, but, when we consider the preceding and following scenes, we cannot but feel that the dramatist inserted it purposely, that coarse humour might enhance the horror by contrast.

<sup>4</sup> **Here's . . . plenty**—In 1606 there was a prospect of plenty in England, so that this may be considered an indication of the date of the composition of the play. The prices were low because the crop was abundant, and hence the farmer's discouragement and consequent act.

you'll sweat for 't. [*Knocking within.*] Knock, knock! Who's there, in the other devil's name? Faith, here's an equivocator,<sup>1</sup> that could swear in both the scales against either scale; who committed treason enough for God's sake,<sup>2</sup> yet could not equivocate to heaven: O, come in, equivocator. [*Knocking within.*] Knock, knock, knock! Who's there? Faith, here's an English tailor come hither, for stealing out of a French hose:<sup>3</sup> come in, tailor; here you may roast your goose. [*Knocking within.*] Knock, knock; never at quiet! What are you? But this place is too cold for hell. I'll devil-porter it no further: I had thought to have let in some of all professions that go the primrose way to the everlasting bonfire.<sup>4</sup> [*Knocking within.*] Anon, anon! I pray you, remember the porter.<sup>5</sup> 21

[*Opens the gate.*]

*Enter MACDUFF and LENNOX.*

*Macd.* Was it so late, friend, ere you went to bed,  
That you do lie so late?

*Port.* 'Faith, sir, we were carousing till the second cock.<sup>6</sup> 25

*Macd.* Is thy master stirring?

*Enter MACBETH.*

Our knocking has awaked him; here he comes.

*Len.* Good morrow, noble sir.

<sup>1</sup> **Equivocator**—A name applied to Jesuits whose doctrine allowed them to contradict themselves even under oath. A trial of this nature took place in 1606, and hence we may consider this another indication of time.

<sup>2</sup> **For God's sake**—They professed that it was.

<sup>3</sup> **French hose**—The English tailor would be an adept who could steal from the short hose of a Frenchman.

<sup>4</sup> **The primrose way, etc.**—The path, strewn with flowers (signifying ease and pleasure), which leads to hell

<sup>5</sup> **Remember the porter**—Remember to be generous to the porter and bestow a fee on him.

<sup>6</sup> **Second cock**—Three o'clock.

*Macb.* Good morrow, both.

*Macd.* Is the king stirring, worthy thane?

*Macb.* Not yet.<sup>30</sup>

*Macd.* He did command me to call timely on him:  
I have almost slipp'd the hour.

*Macb.* I'll bring you to him.

*Macd.* I know this is a joyful trouble to you;  
But yet 't is one.

*Macb.* The labour we delight in physics<sup>1</sup> pain. 35  
This is the door.

*Macd.* I'll make so bold to call,  
For 't is my limited service. [Exit.

*Len.* Goes the king hence to-day?

*Macb.* He does: he did appoint so.

*Len.* The night has been unruly: where we lay,  
Our chimneys were blown down; and, as they say,<sup>40</sup>  
Lamentings heard i' the air; strange screams of death.  
And prophesying with accents terrible  
Of dire combustion<sup>2</sup> and confused events  
New hatch'd to the woeful time: the obscure bird<sup>3</sup>  
Clamour'd the livelong night: some say, the earth<sup>45</sup>  
Was feverous and did shake.

*Macb.* 'T was a rough night.

*Len.* My young remembrance cannot parallel  
A fellow to it.

*Re-enter MACDUFF.*

*Macd.* O horror, horror, horror! Tongue nor heart  
Cannot conceive nor name thee!

*Macb.* }  
*Len.* } What 's the matter?<sup>50</sup>

*Macd.* Confusion<sup>4</sup> now hath made his masterpiece!

<sup>1</sup> **Physics**—Relieves.

<sup>2</sup> **Combustion**—Tumult or confusion.

<sup>3</sup> **Obscure bird**—The owl.

<sup>4</sup> **Confusion**—Destruction.



Most sacrilegious murder hath broke ope  
The Lord's anointed temple,<sup>1</sup> and stole thence  
The life o' the building!

*Macb.* What is 't you say? the life?

*Len.* Mean you his majesty? 55

*Macd.* Approach the chamber, and destroy your sight  
With a new Gorgon<sup>2</sup>: do not bid me speak;  
See, and then speak yourselves.

[*Exeunt Macbeth and Lennox.*]

Awake, awake!

Ring the alarum-bell. Murder and treason!  
Banquo and Donalbain! Malcolm! awake! 60  
Shake off this downy sleep, death's counterfeit,  
And look on death itself! up, up, and see  
The great doom's image!<sup>3</sup> Malcolm! Banquo!  
As from your graves rise up, and walk like sprites,  
To countenance<sup>4</sup> this horror! Ring the bell. [*Bell rings.* <sup>65</sup>

*Enter LADY MACBETH.*

*Lady M.* What's the business,  
That such a hideous trumpet calls to parley<sup>5</sup>  
The sleepers of the house? speak, speak!

*Macd.* O gentle lady,  
'T is not for you to hear what I can speak:  
The repetition, in a woman's ear,  
Would murder as it fell. 70

*Enter BANQUO.*

O Banquo, Banquo,  
Our royal master's murder'd!

<sup>1</sup> **Anointed temple, etc.**—Note the confusion of metaphors.

<sup>2</sup> **Gorgon**—By forcing them to look upon this, Perseus turned his enemies to stone.

<sup>3</sup> **The great doom's image**—A sight similar to that which may be witnessed on the Judgment Day.

<sup>4</sup> **To countenance**—To be anything like or be in keeping with.

<sup>5</sup> **Parley**—Discussion or conference.

*Lady M.*

Woe, alas!

What, in our house?

*Ban.*

Too cruel any where.

Dear Duff, I prithee, contradict thyself,

And say it is not so.

75

*Re-enter MACBETH and LENNOX, with ROSS.*

*Macb.* Had I but died an hour before this chance,  
I had lived a blessed time; for, from this instant,  
There's nothing serious in mortality:<sup>1</sup>

All is but toys: renown and grace is dead;  
The wine of life is drawn, and the mere lees  
Is left this vault to brag of.<sup>2</sup>

80

*Enter MALCOLM and DONALBAIN.*

*Don.* What is amiss?

*Macb.* You are,<sup>3</sup> and do not know't:

The spring, the head, the fountain of your blood  
Is stopp'd; the very source of it is stopp'd.

*Macd.* Your royal father's murder'd.

*Mal.*

O, by whom? <sup>85</sup>

*Len.* Those of his chamber, as it seem'd,<sup>4</sup> had done't:  
Their hands and faces were all badged <sup>5</sup> with blood;  
So were their daggers, which unwiped we found  
Upon their pillows:

They stared, and were distracted; no man's life  
Was to be trusted with them.

90

<sup>1</sup> **There's . . . mortality**—There's nothing great or sacred in human life.

<sup>2</sup> **The mere lees . . . of**—Just as the cellar has been emptied of its best wine and only the lees are left, so the king being dead, the kingdom is deprived of its choicest; or, life being extinct in the king, all that was left was only the lees.

<sup>3</sup> **Are**—Live.

<sup>4</sup> **As it seem'd**—This would almost imply that there was already doubt in the mind of Lennox.

<sup>5</sup> **Badged**—Marked with the sign of murder.

*Macb.* O, yet I do repent me of my fury,  
That I did ~~not~~ kill them.

*Macd.* Wherefore did you so?

*Macb.* Who can be wise, amazed, temperate and  
furious,

Loyal and neutral, in a moment? No man:

95

The expedition<sup>1</sup> of my violent love

Outrun the pauser, reason.<sup>2</sup> Here lay Duncan,

His silver skin laced with his golden blood;<sup>3</sup>

And his gash'd stabs look'd like a breach in nature

For ruin's wasteful entrance:<sup>4</sup> there, the murderers,

Steep'd in the colours of their trade,<sup>5</sup> their daggers<sup>101</sup>

Unmannerly breech'd with gore:<sup>6</sup> who could refrain,

That had a heart to love, and in that heart

Courage to make 's love known?

*Lady M.*

Help me hence,<sup>7</sup> ho!

105

*Macd.* Look to the lady.

<sup>1</sup> **Expedition**—Haste.

<sup>2</sup> **Outrun the pauser, reason**—Led him to act before reason had time to advise him and make him pause.

<sup>3</sup> **His silver . . . blood**—The fair skin of Duncan, covered with his red, royal blood, resembled the silver cloth adorned with golden lacings or patterns.

<sup>4</sup> **His gash'd . . . entrance**—His wounds, like the breaches made by an enemy in the city's walls, brought destruction or death.

<sup>5</sup> **Steep'd . . . trade**—The amount of blood upon them showed only too well that they were murderers.

<sup>6</sup> **Breech'd with gore**—Covered with blood to the breech or hilt, or covered with gore as with breeches.

<sup>7</sup> **Help me hence**—Our interpretation of Lady Macbeth's faint depends entirely upon our idea of her character. She utters few words when the murder is being discussed; is never concerned in another murder and afterwards loses her reason. She had determined to aid her husband at any cost to herself, but the scene of the murder, the dead king and murdered grooms, and Macbeth's wordy description of the horrors, are too much for her womanly nature, which is stronger than her will. Her faint prepares us for her insanity and death, following a constant realization that she can never recover from this deed—"What, will these hands ne'er be clean?"

*Mal.* [*Aside to Don.*] Why do we hold our tongues,  
That most may claim this argument for ours?

*Don.* [*Aside to Mal.*] What should be spoken here,  
where our fate,  
Hid in an auger-hole, may rush, and seize us? <sup>1</sup>  
Let's away; 110

Our tears are not yet brew'd.<sup>2</sup>

*Mal.* [*Aside to Don.*] Nor our strong sorrow  
Upon the foot of motion.<sup>3</sup>

*Ban.* Look to the lady:  
[*Lady Macbeth is carried out.*]

And when we have our naked frailties hid,  
That suffer in exposure, let us meet,  
And question this most bloody piece of work, 115  
To know it further. Fears and scruples shake us:  
In the great hand of God I stand; and thence  
Against the undivulged pretence <sup>4</sup> I fight  
Of treasonous malice.

*Macd.* And so do I.

*All.* So all.

*Macb.* Let's briefly put on manly readiness, <sup>5</sup> 120  
And meet i' the hall together.

*All.* Well contented.

[*Exeunt all but Malcolm and Donalbain.*]

*Mal.* What will you do? Let's not consort with  
them: <sup>6</sup>

To show an unfelt sorrow is an office  
Which the false man does easy. I'll to England.

<sup>1</sup> **Where our fate . . . us**—He fears they may be attacked by those whom they least suspect and whose treachery is obscurely hidden.

<sup>2</sup> **Our tears . . . brew'd**—It is no time for them to weep.

<sup>3</sup> **Our strong . . . motion**—Their great sorrow has made it impossible for them to act as yet, to take revenge.

<sup>4</sup> **Pretence**—Design.

<sup>5</sup> **Put on manly readiness**—Dress.

<sup>6</sup> **Them**—This suggests that the princes suspected all.

*Don.* To Ireland, I; our separate fortune  
Shall keep us both the safer: where we are,  
There's daggers in men's smiles:<sup>1</sup> the near in blood,  
The nearer bloody.

125

*Mal.* This murderous shaft that's shot  
Hath not yet lighted,<sup>2</sup> and our safest way  
Is to avoid the aim. Therefore, to horse;  
And let us not be dainty of leave-taking,  
But shift<sup>3</sup> away: there's warrant in that theft  
Which steals itself, when there's no mercy left. [*Exeunt.*]

139

SCENE IV. *Outside Macbeth's castle.*

*Enter Ross and an old Man.*

*Old M.* Threescore and ten I can remember well:  
Within the volume of which time I have seen  
Hours dreadful and things strange; but this sore night  
Hath trifled<sup>4</sup> former knowings.

*Ross.* Ah, good father,  
Thou seest, the heavens, as troubled with man's act,<sup>5</sup>  
Threaten his bloody stage:<sup>5</sup> by the clock, 't is day,  
And yet dark night strangles the trave'ling lamp:<sup>6</sup>  
Is 't night's predominance, or the day's shame,<sup>7</sup>  
That darkness does the face of earth entomb,  
When living light should kiss it?

---

<sup>1</sup> **There's . . . smiles, etc.**—Those who seem friendly have murder in their hearts, and those who are most nearly related are most likely to be guilty of murder. This seems to point to Macbeth, who was Duncan's cousin.

<sup>2</sup> **Hath not yet lighted**—They would be in danger also, as they were the king's sons.

<sup>3</sup> **Shift**—Steal.

<sup>4</sup> **Trifled**—Made trifling or of little importance.

<sup>5</sup> **Threaten . . . stage**—The heavens are threatening vengeance upon the earth where such bloody deeds are being committed.

<sup>6</sup> **Travelling lamp**—The sun.

<sup>7</sup> **Is 't . . . shame**—Is night more powerful than day, or is day ashamed to look upon such deeds?

*Old M.* 'T is unnatural, 10  
 Even like the deed that's done. On Tuesday last,  
 A falcon, towering in her pride of place,<sup>1</sup>  
 Was by a mousing owl <sup>2</sup> hawk'd at and kill'd.

*Ross.* And Duncan's horses — a thing most strange  
 and certain —  
 Beauteous and swift, the minions of their race, 15  
 Turn'd wild in nature, broke their stalls, flung out,  
 Contending 'gainst obedience, as they would make  
 War with mankind.

*Old M.* 'T is said they eat each other.

*Ross.* They did so, to the amazement of mine eyes  
 That look'd upon 't. Here comes the good Macduff.<sup>20</sup>

*Enter MACDUFF.*

How goes the world, sir, now?

*Macd.* Why, see you not?

*Ross.* Is't known who did this more than bloody deed?

*Macd.* Those that Macbeth hath slain.

*Ross.* Alas, the day!

What good <sup>3</sup> could they pretend <sup>4</sup>?

*Macd.* They were suborn'd:  
 Malcolm and Donalbain, the king's two sons, 25  
 Are stol'n away and fled; which puts upon them  
 Suspicion of the deed.

*Ross.* 'Gainst nature still <sup>5</sup>!  
 Thriftless ambition, that wilt ravin up <sup>6</sup>  
 Thine own life's means! Then 't is most like  
 The sovereignty will fall upon Macbeth. 30

<sup>1</sup> **Towering** and **place** are terms used in falconry.

<sup>2</sup> **Mousing owl**—A bird, which sought its food or prey on the ground, killed the soaring falcon.

<sup>3</sup> **Good**—Advantage to themselves.

<sup>4</sup> **Pretend**—Seek or intend.

<sup>5</sup> **Still**—Also, as well as what he and the old man had just been speaking of.

<sup>6</sup> **Ravin up**—Devour greedily.



*Macd.* He is already named, and gone to Scone<sup>1</sup>  
To be invested.

*Ross*                      Where is Duncan's body?

*Macd.* Carried to Colmekill,<sup>2</sup>  
The sacred storehouse of his predecessors,  
And guardian of their bones.

*Ross.*                      Will you to Scone?                      · 35

*Macd.* No, cousin, I'll to Fife.

*Ross.*                      Well, I will thither.

*Macd.* Well, may you see things well done there:  
adieu!

Lest our old robes sit easier than our new!<sup>3</sup>

*Ross.* Farewell, father.

*Old M.* God's benison go with you; and with those<sup>40</sup>  
That would make good of bad, and friends of foes!

[*Exeunt.*

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<sup>1</sup> **Scone**—Once a city, two and a half miles from Perth, where the kings were crowned. The coronation stone is now in Westminster Abbey.

<sup>2</sup> **Colmekill**, or St. Columba's cell or Iona, one of the Western Isles, was the burial place of the Scottish kings.

<sup>3</sup> **Lest . . . new**—Macduff fears that the new condition of affairs may not be as pleasing to them as the old. He shows his attitude towards Macbeth.

## ACT III.

SCENE I. *Forres. The palace.**Enter BANQUO.*

*Ban.* Thou hast it now: king, Cawdor, Glamis, all,  
 As the weird women promised, and, I fear,  
 Thou play'dst most foully for 't:<sup>1</sup> yet it was said  
 It should not stand in thy posterity,  
 But that myself should be the root and father 5  
 Of many kings. If there come truth from them—  
 As upon thee, Macbeth, their speeches shine —  
 Why, by the verities on thee made good,  
 May they not be my oracles as well,  
 And set me up in hope? But hush, no more. 10

*Sennet<sup>2</sup> sounded. Enter MACBETH, as king, LADY MACBETH, as queen, LENNOX, ROSS, Lords, Ladies, and Attendants.*

*Macb.* Here's our chief guest.

*Lady M.* If he had been forgotten,  
 It had been as a gap in our great feast,  
 And all-thing<sup>3</sup> unbecoming.

*Macb.* To-night we hold a solemn supper, sir,  
 And I'll request your presence.

*Ban.* Let your highness 15  
 Command upon me; to the which my duties  
 Are with a most indissoluble tie  
 For ever knit.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *I fear . . . for 't*—Banquo's speech reveals that he believes Macbeth is responsible for the murder of Duncan.

<sup>2</sup> *Sennet*—A set of notes on a trumpet used as a signal; found in *Julius Cæsar* and other plays; stage signal.

<sup>3</sup> *All-thing*—Altogether.

<sup>4</sup> *My duties . . . knit*—As a subject it was his duty to revere and obey his king.

*Macb.* Ride you this afternoon?

*Ban.* Ay, my good lord.

20

*Macb.* We should have else desired your good advice,  
Which still hath been both grave and prosperous,  
In this day's council; but we'll take to-morrow.  
Is't far you ride?

*Ban.* As far, my lord, as will fill up the time  
'Twixt this and supper: go not my horse the better,  
I must become a borrower of the night  
For a dark hour or twain.

25

*Macb.* Fail not our feast.

*Ban.* My lord, I will not.

*Macb.* We hear, our bloody cousins are bestow'd<sup>1</sup>  
In England and in Ireland, not confessing  
Their cruel parricide, filling their hearers  
With strange invention: but of that to-morrow,  
When therewithal we shall have cause of state  
Craving us jointly.<sup>2</sup> Hie you to horse: adieu,  
Till you return at night. Goes Fleance with you?

35

*Ban.* Ay, my good lord: our time does call upon's.

*Macb.* I wish your horses swift and sure of foot;  
And so I do commend you to their backs.  
Farewell.

[*Exit Banquo.* 40.]

Let every man be master of his time  
Till seven at night. To make society  
The sweeter welcome, we will keep ourself  
Till supper-time alone: while then, God be with you!

[*Exeunt all but Macbeth, and an Attendant.*]

Sirrah, a word with you: attend those men  
Our pleasure?

45

*Atten.* They are, my lord, without the palace gate.

*Macb.* Bring them before us.

[*Exit Attendant.*]

To be thus is nothing;

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<sup>1</sup> **Are bestow'd**—Have found refuge.

<sup>2</sup> **Craving us jointly**—Requiring consideration on the part of both.

But to be safely thus.<sup>1</sup> —Our fears in Banquo  
 Stick deep; and in his royalty<sup>2</sup> of nature 50  
 Reigns that which would be fear'd: 't is much he dares;  
 And, to that dauntless temper of his mind,  
 He hath a wisdom that doth guide his valour  
 To act in safety. There is none but he  
 Whose being I do fear: and, under him, 55  
 My Genius is rebuked; as, it is said,  
 Mark Antony's was by Cæsar. He chid the sisters  
 When first they put the name of king upon me,  
 And bade them speak to him: then prophet-like  
 They hail'd him father to a line of kings: 60  
 Upon my head they placed a fruitless crown,  
 And put a barren sceptre in my gripe,  
 Thence to be wrench'd with an unlineal hand,  
 No son of mine succeeding. If 't be so,  
 For Banquo's issue have I filed my mind; 65  
 For them the gracious Duncan have I murder'd;  
 Put rancours in the vessel of my peace  
 Only for them; and mine eternal jewel<sup>3</sup>  
 Given to the common enemy of man,  
 To make them kings, the seed of Banquo kings! 70  
 Rather than so, come fate into the list,  
 And champion me to the utterance!<sup>4</sup> Who's there?

*Re-enter Attendant, with two Murderers.*

Now go to the door, and stay there till we call.

*[Exit Attendant.]*

Was it not yesterday we spoke together?

<sup>1</sup> **To be thus . . . thus**—To be king is nothing if he is unsafe.

<sup>2</sup> **Royalty**—Nobility. Macbeth knows that Banquo is noble and cannot be tempted by bribes or otherwise. Banquo will act when he is convinced that it is wise to do so, and hence Macbeth fears him greatly. Macbeth in his guilt felt rebuked in the presence of Banquo.

<sup>3</sup> **Mine eternal jewel**—Immortal soul.

<sup>4</sup> **Champion . . . utterance**—Dare me to fight to the bitter end. (French, *a l'outrance*.)

*First Mur.* It was, so please your highness.

*Macb.*

Well then, now <sup>75</sup>

Have you consider'd of my speeches? Know  
That it was he in the times past which held you  
So under fortune, which you thought had been  
Our innocent self: <sup>1</sup> this I made good to you  
In our last conference, pass'd in probation <sup>2</sup> with you, <sup>80</sup>  
How you were borne in hand, <sup>3</sup> how cross'd, the instru-  
ments,

Who wrought with them, and all things else that might  
To half a soul and to a notion crazed <sup>4</sup>

Say "Thus did Banquo."

*First Mur.*

You made it known to us.

*Macb.* I did so, and went further, which is now <sup>85</sup>  
Our point of second meeting. Do you find  
Your patience so predominant in your nature  
That you can let this go? Are you so gossell'd <sup>5</sup>  
To pray for this good man and for his issue,  
Whose heavy hand hath bow'd you to the grave <sup>90</sup>  
And beggar'd yours for ever?

*First Mur.*

We are men, my liege.

*Macb.* Ay, in the catalogue <sup>6</sup> ye go for men;  
As hounds and greyhounds, mongrels, spaniels, curs,  
Shoughs, <sup>7</sup> water-rugs <sup>8</sup> and demi-wolves, are clept <sup>9</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> **Our innocent self**—Macbeth is cunningly instigating these men against Banquo, but we feel perfectly sure that he is the one who has wronged them.

<sup>2</sup> **Pass'd in probation**—Spent, endeavouring to bring proofs.

<sup>3</sup> **Borne in hand**—Managed by promises.

<sup>4</sup> **To a notion crazed**—To the weakest mind.

<sup>5</sup> **Gossell'd**—Controlled by your religious teaching (so that you will pray.)

<sup>6</sup> **Catalogue**—The list of all men.

<sup>7</sup> **Shoughs**—Shocks.

<sup>8</sup> **Water-rugs**—A kind of poodle.

<sup>9</sup> **Clept**—Called.

All by the name of dogs: the valued file <sup>1</sup> 95  
 Distinguishes the swift, the slow, the subtle,  
 The housekeeper, the hunter, every one  
 According to the gift which bounteous nature  
 Hath in him closed; whereby he does receive  
 Particular addition; from the bill 100  
 That writes them all alike: and so of men.  
 Now, if you have a station in the file,  
 Not in the worst rank of manhood, say it:  
 And I will put that business in your bosoms,  
 Whose execution takes your enemy off, 105  
 Grapples you to the heart and love of us,  
 Who wear our health but sickly in his life,  
 Which in his death were perfect.<sup>2</sup>

*Sec. Mur.* I am one, my liege,  
 Whom the vile blows and buffets of the world  
 Have so incensed that I am reckless what 110  
 I do to spite the world.

*First Mur.* And I another  
 So weary with disasters, tugg'd with fortune,<sup>3</sup>  
 That I would set my life on any chance,  
 To mend it, or be rid on't.

*Macb.* Both of you  
 Know Banquo was your enemy.

*Both Mur.* True, my lord. 115

*Macb.* So is he mine; and in such bloody distance,<sup>4</sup>  
 That every minute of his being thrusts

<sup>1</sup> **Valued file**—The particular catalogue in which classification is made.

<sup>2</sup> **I will put . . . perfect**—I will tell you how to get rid of your enemy and make a friend of one who does not enjoy life as much because he is living.

<sup>3</sup> **Tugg'd with fortune**—Dragged hither and thither while struggling with fortune.

<sup>4</sup> **In such bloody distance**—So close as to suggest murder. "Distance" is a term in fencing.



Against my near'st of life:<sup>1</sup> and though I could  
 With barefaced power sweep him from my sight  
 And bid my will avouch it,<sup>2</sup> yet I must not, 120  
 For certain friends that are both his and mine,  
 Whose loves I may not drop, but wail his fall  
 Who I myself struck down; and thence it is,  
 That I to your assistance do make love,  
 Masking the business from the common eye 125  
 For sundry weighty reasons.

*Sec. Mur.*

We shall, my lord,

Perform what you command us.

*First Mur.*

Though our lives —

*Macb.* Your spirits shine through you. Within this  
 hour at most,

I will advise you where to plant yourselves;  
 Acquaint you with the perfect spy o' the time,<sup>3</sup> 130  
 The moment on't; for 't must be done to-night,  
 And something from the palace; always thought  
 That I require a clearness:<sup>4</sup> and with him —  
 To leave no rubs <sup>5</sup> nor botches in the work —  
 Fleance his son, that keeps him company, 135  
 Whose absence is no less material to me  
 Than is his father's, must embrace the fate  
 Of that dark hour. Resolve yourselves apart:<sup>6</sup>  
 I'll come to you anon.

*Both Mur.*

We are resolved, my lord.

<sup>1</sup> **My near'st of life**—My very life itself.

<sup>2</sup> **Bid my will avouch it**—Acknowledge that I meant to do it.

<sup>3</sup> **The perfect spy o' the time**—The exact time when the deed is to be done.

<sup>4</sup> **Always thought . . . clearness**—It is always to be remembered that I am not to be suspected.

<sup>5</sup> **Rubs**—Hindrances.

<sup>6</sup> **Resolve yourselves apart**—Go away and decide upon what you will do.

*Macb.* I'll call upon you straight: abide within. <sup>140</sup>  
[*Exeunt Murderers.*]

It is concluded. Banquo, thy soul's flight,  
 If it find heaven, must find it out to-night. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II. *The palace.*

*Enter* LADY MACBETH and a Servant.

*Lady M.* Is Banquo gone from court?

*Serv.* Ay, madam, but returns again to-night.

*Lady M.* Say to the king, I would attend his leisure  
 For a few words.

*Serv.* Madam, I will. [*Exit.*]

*Lady M.* Nought's had, all's spent,  
 Where our desire is got without content:<sup>1</sup> 5  
 'T is safer to be that which we destroy  
 Than by destruction dwell in doubtful joy.

*Enter* MACBETH.

How now, my lord! why do you keep alone,  
 Of sorriest<sup>2</sup> fancies your companions making,  
 Using<sup>3</sup> those thoughts which should indeed have died <sup>10</sup>  
 With them they think on? Things without all remedy  
 Should be without regard: what's done is done.

*Macb.* We have scotch'd<sup>4</sup> the snake, not kill'd it:  
 She'll close<sup>5</sup> and be herself, whilst our poor malice  
 Remains in danger of her former tooth. 15

<sup>1</sup> **Content**—Satisfaction. Lady Macbeth, in this speech, shows what she is silently enduring, even while she still assumes (an appearance of) strength in her husband's presence.

<sup>2</sup> **Sorriest**—Saddest.

<sup>3</sup> **Using**—Cherishing.

<sup>4</sup> **Scotch'd**—Gashed.

<sup>5</sup> **She'll close**—The parts will unite.

But let the frame<sup>1</sup> of things disjoint, both the worlds  
suffer,

Ere we will eat our meal in fear, and sleep  
In the affliction of these terrible dreams  
That shake us nightly. Better be with the dead,  
Whom we, to gain our place, have sent to peace, 20  
Than on the torture of the mind to lie  
In restless ecstasy.<sup>2</sup> Duncan is in his grave;  
After life's fitful fever he sleeps well;  
Treason has done his worst: nor steel, nor poison,  
Malice domestic,<sup>3</sup> foreign levy,<sup>4</sup> nothing, 25  
Can touch him further.

*Lady M.* Come on;  
Gentle my lord, sleek o'er your rugged looks;  
Be bright and jovial among your guests to-night.

*Macb.* So shall I, love; and so, I pray, be you:  
Let your remembrance apply to Banquo;<sup>5</sup> 30  
Present him eminence,<sup>6</sup> both with eye and tongue:  
Unsafe the while, that we<sup>7</sup>  
Must lay our honours in these flattering streams,  
And make our faces vizards<sup>8</sup> to our hearts,  
Disguising what they are.

*Lady M.* You must leave this. 35

*Macb.* O, full of scorpions is my mind, dear wife!  
Thou know'st that Banquo, and his Fleance, lives.

<sup>1</sup> **But let the frame, etc.**—Macbeth hurls defiance in the face of heaven. The whole universe, heaven and earth, may perish, if he may rid himself of his fears and terrible dreams.

<sup>2</sup> **Than on the torture . . . ecstasy**—Than to be beside oneself or tortured by one's own thoughts.

<sup>3</sup> **Malice domestic**—Rebellion.

<sup>4</sup> **Foreign levy**—Invasion.

<sup>5</sup> **Let . . . Banquo**—Devote your thoughts particularly to Banquo.

<sup>6</sup> **Present him eminence**—Treat him with great distinction.

<sup>7</sup> **That we**—"For safety's sake," or a similar expression, seems necessary.

<sup>8</sup> **Vizards**—Masks.

*Lady M.* But in them nature's copy's not eterne.<sup>1</sup>

*Macb.* There's comfort yet; they are assailable;  
Then be thou jocund: ere the bat hath flown <sup>46</sup>  
His cloister'd <sup>2</sup> flight, ere to black Hecate's <sup>3</sup> summons  
The shard-borne <sup>4</sup> beetle with his drowsy hums  
Hath rung night's yawning <sup>5</sup> peal, there shall be done  
A deed of dreadful note.

*Lady M.* What's to be done?

*Macb.* Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest chuck,<sup>6</sup>  
Till thou applaud the deed. Come, seeling <sup>7</sup> night, <sup>46</sup>  
Scarf <sup>8</sup> up the tender eye of pitiful day;  
And with thy bloody and invisible hand  
Cancel and tear to pieces that great bond <sup>9</sup>  
Which keeps me pale! Light thickens; and the crow  
Makes wing to the rooky <sup>10</sup> wood: <sup>51</sup>  
Good things of day begin to droop and drowse;<sup>11</sup>  
Whiles night's black agents to their preys do rouse.  
Thou marvell'st at my words: but hold thee still:  
Things bad begun make strong themselves by ill. <sup>55</sup>  
So, prithee, go with me.<sup>12</sup> [Exeunt.]

<sup>1</sup> **Nature's copy's not eterne**—They have no everlasting copyhold or tenure of life, i.e., they will not live forever.

<sup>2</sup> **Cloister'd**—Wheeling about in a limited space.

<sup>3</sup> **Hecate**—Goddess of night.

<sup>4</sup> **Shard-borne**—Carried on his shards or horny wing-cases.

<sup>5</sup> **Yawning**—Sleep-inducing.

<sup>6</sup> **Chuck**—A corrupted form of "chick."

<sup>7</sup> **Seeling**—Blinding; a term used in falconry.

<sup>8</sup> **Scarf**—Cover.

<sup>9</sup> **Bond**—Banquo's life.

<sup>10</sup> **Rooky**—Gloomy or frequented by rooks.

<sup>11</sup> **Good . . . drowse**—The climax of the play is reached, and the pervading thought is here expressed.

<sup>12</sup> **Go with me**—May be taken literally; by many is thought to mean "consent to my plan."

SCENE III. *A park near the palace.**Enter three Murderers.**First Mur.* But who did bid thee join with us?*Third Mur.* Macbeth.*Sec. Mur.* He needs not our mistrust, since he delivers  
Our offices and what we have to do  
To the direction just.<sup>1</sup>*First Mur.* Then stand with us.  
The west yet glimmers with some streaks of day: 5  
Now spurs the lated<sup>2</sup> traveller apace  
To gain the timely inn; and near approaches  
The subject of our watch.*Third Mur.* Hark! I hear horses.*Ban.* [*Within.*] Give us a light there, ho!*Sec. Mur.* Then 't is he: the rest 10  
That are within the note of expectation<sup>3</sup>  
Already are i' the court.*First Mur.* His horses go about.<sup>4</sup>*Third Mur.* Almost a mile; but he does usually,  
So all men do, from hence to the palace gate  
Make it their walk.*Sec. Mur.* A light, a light!*Enter BANQUO, and FLEANCE with a torch.**Third Mur.* 'T is he.*First Mur.* Stand to't. 15*Ban.* It will be rain to-night.*First Mur.* Let it come down.  
[*They set upon Banquo.*]

---

<sup>1</sup> **To the direction just**—Exactly, according to directions.

<sup>2</sup> **Lated**—Belated.

<sup>3</sup> **Within the note of expectation**—Named in the list of expected guests.

<sup>4</sup> **His horses go about**—This device obviates the difficulty of introducing horses on the stage.

*Ban.* O, treachery! Fly, good Fleance, fly, fly, fly!  
Thou mayst revenge. O slave! [*Dies. Fleance escapes.*]

*Third Mur.* Who did strike out the light?

*First Mur.* Was 't not the way?

*Third Mur.* There's but one down; the son is fled.<sup>1</sup>

*Sec. Mur.* We have lost

Best half of our affair. 21

*First Mur.* Well, let's away, and say how much is  
done. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV. *The same. Hall in the palace.*

*A banquet prepared. Enter MACBETH, LADY MACBETH,  
ROSS, LENNOX, Lords and Attendants.*

*Macb.* You know your own degrees;<sup>2</sup> sit down: at  
first

And last<sup>3</sup> the hearty welcome.

*Lords.* Thanks to your majesty.

*Macb.* Ourself will mingle with society,  
And play the humble host.

Our hostess keeps her state,<sup>4</sup> but in best time 5

We will require her welcome.

*Lady M.* Pronounce it for me, sir, to all our friends;  
For my heart speaks they are welcome.

*First Murderer appears at the door.*

*Macb.* See, they encounter thee with their hearts'  
thanks.

Both sides are even: here I'll sit i' the midst: 10

Be large in mirth; anon<sup>5</sup> we'll drink a measure

<sup>1</sup> **The son is fled**—The escape of Fleance is Macbeth's first failure, and it is the keynote of his downfall.

<sup>2</sup> **Degrees**—They were seated according to rank.

<sup>3</sup> **At first and last**—"Throughout the feast," or "to those of all ranks."

<sup>4</sup> **Her state**—Her chair of state.

<sup>5</sup> **Anon**—Presently. Evidently Macbeth has just noticed the murderer and hence excuses himself for a moment.



The table round. [*Approaching the door.*] There's  
blood upon thy face.

*Mur.* 'T is Banquo's then.

*Macb.* 'T is better thee without than he within.

Is he dispatch'd?

15

*Mur.* My lord, his throat is cut; that I did for him.

*Macb.* Thou art the best 'o the cut-throats: yet  
he's good

That did the like for Fleance; if thou didst it,  
Thou art the nonpareil.<sup>1</sup>

*Mur.* Most royal sir,

Fleance is 'scaped.

20

*Macb.* Then comes my fit<sup>2</sup> again: I had else been  
perfect,<sup>3</sup>

Whole as the marble, founded as the rock,

As broad and general as the casing air:

But now I am cabin'd, cribb'd, confined, bound in  
To saucy<sup>4</sup> doubts and fears. But Banquo's safe? <sup>25</sup>

*Mur.* Ay, my good lord: safe in a ditch he bides,  
With twenty trenched gashes in his head;  
The least a death to nature.

*Macb.* Thanks for that:

There the grown serpent lies; the worm that's fled  
Hath nature that in time will venom breed, <sup>30</sup>

No teeth for the present. Get thee gone: to-morrow  
We'll hear ourselves again. [*Exit Murderer.*]

*Lady M.*

My royal lord,

---

<sup>1</sup> **Nonpareil**—Unequalled one. The fact that Macbeth apparently does not know that Fleance has escaped is a proof that he was not the third murderer.

<sup>2</sup> **My fit**—His fears and misgivings.

<sup>3</sup> **I had . . . perfect**—Were it not for this he would have felt perfectly safe in his position.

<sup>4</sup> **Saucy**—i.e., they will come in spite of him.

You do not give the cheer: the feast is sold  
 That is not often vouch'd, while 't is a-making,<sup>1</sup>  
 'T is given with welcome: to feed were best at home;  
 From thence the sauce to meat is ceremony;  
 Meeting were bare without it. 38

*Macb.* Sweet remembrancer!

Now, good digestion wait on appetite,  
 And health on both!

*Len.* May 't please your highness sit.

*[The Ghost of Banquo enters and sits  
 in Macbeth's place.]*  
*Silence - partying*

*Macb.* Here had we now our country's honour roof'd,  
 Were the graced<sup>2</sup> person of our Banquo present;  
 Who may I rather challenge for unkindness  
 Than pity for mischance!<sup>3</sup> 41

*Ross.* His absence, sir,  
 Lays blame upon his promise. Please't your highness  
 To grace us with your royal company. 45

*Macb.* The table's full.

*Len.* Here is a place reserved, sir.

*Macb.* Where?

*Len.* Here, my good lord. What is't that moves  
 your highness?

*Macb.* Which of you have done this?<sup>4</sup>

*Lords.* What, my good lord?

*Macb.* Thou canst not say I did it: never shake<sup>50</sup>  
 Thy gory locks at me.

<sup>1</sup> **The feast . . . a-making**—While the feast is in progress, if the host does not often assure his guests that they are welcome they think they are not. Courteous treatment is what makes the feast enjoyable.

<sup>2</sup> **Graced**—Full of grace.

<sup>3</sup> **Who . . . mischance**—He may rather blame Banquo for his absence than pity him, because some accident may have happened to him.

<sup>4</sup> **Which . . . this?**—He evidently thinks they are playing some trick on him.

*Ross.* Gentlemen, rise: his highness is not well.

*Lady M.* Sit, worthy friends: my lord is often thus,  
And hath been from his youth: pray you, keep seat,  
The fit is momentary; upon a thought 55  
He will again be well: if much you note him,  
You shall offend him and extend his passion:<sup>1</sup>  
Feed, and regard him not.

[*Aside to Macbeth.*] Are you a man?<sup>2</sup>

*Macb.* Ay, and a bold one, that dare look on that  
Which might appal the devil.

*Lady M.* O proper stuff!<sup>3</sup> 60

This is the very painting of your fear:  
This is the air-drawn dagger<sup>4</sup> which, you said,  
Led you to Duncan. O, these flaws<sup>5</sup> and starts,  
Impostors to true fear, would well become  
A woman's story at a winter's fire, 65  
Authorized by<sup>6</sup> her grandam. Shame itself!  
Why do you make such faces? When all's done,  
You look but on a stool.<sup>7</sup>

*Macb.* Prithee, see there! behold! look! lo! how  
say you<sup>8</sup>? - *ghost gets up.*

Why, what care I? If thou canst nod, speak too. 70  
If charnel-houses and our graves must send  
Those that we bury back, our monuments  
Shall be the maws of kites. [*Ghost vanishes*]

*Lady M.* [*Aside to Macbeth.*] What, quite unmann'd *no!*  
in folly? *whisper*

<sup>1</sup> **Extend his passion**—Make him worse.

<sup>2</sup> **Are you a man?**—Lady Macbeth tries to use her old-time influence, but fails to restore him.

<sup>3</sup> **Proper stuff**—Entire nonsense.

<sup>4</sup> **Air-drawn dagger**—She evidently thinks he is seeing something similar to what he had witnessed in the dagger scene.

<sup>5</sup> **Flaws**—Sudden fits of emotion.

<sup>6</sup> **Authorized by**—Which she has been told, and hence goes on the authority of her grandmother.

<sup>7</sup> **You look . . . stool**—Lady Macbeth apparently sees only the empty chair and not the ghost.

<sup>8</sup> **You**—Is used in addressing his wife and "thou" the ghost.

*Macb.* If I stand here: I saw him.

*Lady M.* [Aside to *Macbeth*.] Fie, for shame!

*Macb.* Blood hath been shed ere now, i' the olden  
time, 75

Ere humane statute purged the gentle weal;<sup>1</sup>

Ay, and since too, murders have been perform'd

Too terrible for the ear; the time has been,

That, when the brains were out, the man would die,

And there an end; but now they rise again, 80

With twenty mortal murders on their crowns,

And push us from our stools: this is more strange

Than such a murder is.

*Lady M.* My worthy lord,

Your noble friends do lack you.

*Macb.* I do forget.

Do not muse at me, my most worthy friends: 85

I have a strange infirmity,<sup>2</sup> which is nothing

To those that know me. Come, love and health to all;

Then I'll sit down. Give me some wine; fill full.

*Enter Ghost.*

I drink to the general joy o' the whole table,

And to our dear friend Banquo, whom we miss; 90

Would he were here! to all, and him, we thirst,

And all to all.<sup>3</sup>

*Lords.* Our duties, and the pledge.

*Macb.* Avaunt!<sup>4</sup> and quit my sight! let the earth  
hide thee!

Thy bones are marrowless, thy blood is cold;

<sup>1</sup> **Ere humane . . . weal**—Human or humane laws had driven out severe measures or purged the common weal into gentleness.

<sup>2</sup> **I have a strange infirmity**—It seems as if they had agreed upon a common explanation.

<sup>3</sup> **All to all**—Every good wish to all.

<sup>4</sup> **Avaunt**—Away. Macbeth assumes courage, but as soon as he begins to think of his recent crime the ghost returns and he is once more unarmed.

Thou hast no speculation <sup>1</sup> in those eyes  
Which thou dost glare with!

95

*Lady M.* Think of this, good peers,  
But as a thing of custom; 't is no other;  
Only it spoils the pleasure of the time.

*Macb.* What man dare, I dare:  
Approach thou like the rugged Russian bear,  
The arm'd <sup>2</sup> rhinoceros, or the Hyrcan <sup>3</sup> tiger;  
Take any shape but that, and my firm nerves  
Shall never tremble: or be alive again,  
And dare me to the desert with thy sword;  
If trembling I inhabit then, <sup>4</sup> protest me  
The baby of a girl. <sup>5</sup> Hence, horrible shadow!  
Unreal mockery, hence! [*Ghost vanishes.*]

100

105

Why, so: being gone,  
I am a man again. Pray you, sit still.

*Lady M.* You have displaced the mirth, broke the  
good meeting,  
With most admired disorder.

*Macb.* Can such things be, <sup>110</sup>  
And overcome <sup>6</sup> us like a summer's cloud,  
Without our special wonder? You make me strange  
Even to the disposition that I owe, <sup>7</sup>  
When now I think you can behold such sights,

<sup>1</sup> **Speculation**—Intelligence or light of intellect.

<sup>2</sup> **Arm'd**—His thick hide was like armour to him.

<sup>3</sup> **Hyrcan**—Hyrcania was a district south and southeast of the Caspian Sea. Hyrcania and its tigers had been mentioned by Virgil and others.

<sup>4</sup> **If trembling I inhabit then**—If then I am overcome by fear or remain at home when dared to fight. Many different explanations have been given, but this seems the most reasonable.

<sup>5</sup> **The baby of a girl**—A girl's doll. A very weakling or mere pretence of a man.

<sup>6</sup> **Overcome**—Overshadow unexpectedly.

<sup>7</sup> **You make . . . owe**—Because I see you remain unmoved while I am overcome by fear, I am incapable of understanding my own disposition or state of mind.

And keep the natural ruby of your cheeks, 115  
When mine is blanch'd with fear.

*Ross.* What sights, my lord?

*Lady M.* I pray you, speak not; he grows worse  
and worse;

Question enrages him. At once, good night:

Stand not upon the order of your going,<sup>1</sup>

But go at once.

*Len.* Good night; and better health 120

Attend his majesty!

*Lady M.* A kind good night to all! —

[*Exeunt all but Macbeth and Lady M.*]

*Macb.* It will have blood; they say, blood will have  
blood:

Stones<sup>2</sup> have been known to move and trees to speak;  
Auguries and understood relations<sup>3</sup> have

By magot-pies and choughs and rooks brought forth<sup>125</sup>

The secret'st man of blood. What is the night?<sup>4</sup>

*Lady M.* Almost at odds with<sup>5</sup> morning, which is  
which.

*Macb.* How say'st thou, that Macduff denies his  
person

At our great bidding?

*Lady M.* Did you send to him, sir?

*Macb.* I hear it by the way; but I will send: 130

There's not a man of them but in his house

I keep a servant fee'd. I will to-morrow,

And betimes I will, to the weird sisters:

More shall they speak; for now I am bent to know,

<sup>1</sup> **Stand . . . going**—You need not regard the ordinary courtesies of leave-taking, according to your rank.

<sup>2</sup> **Stones**—There is an old stone near Glamis Castle which it is thought the Druids used for testing innocence or guilt.

<sup>3</sup> **Understood relations**—The known connection between cause and effect.

<sup>4</sup> **What is the night?**—How far is the night advanced?

<sup>5</sup> **At odds with**—Disputing with.



By the worst means, the worst. For mine own good,  
 All causes shall give way: I am in blood 136  
 Stepp'd in so far that, should I wade no more,  
 Returning were as tedious as go o'er:  
 Strange things I have in head, that will to hand;  
 Which must be acted ere they may be scann'd. 140

*Lady M.* You lack the season<sup>1</sup> of all natures, sleep.

*Macb.* Come, we'll to sleep. My strange and self-abuse<sup>2</sup>

Is the initiate fear<sup>3</sup> that wants hard use:

We are yet but young in deed. [*Exeunt.*]

### SCENE V. *A heath.*

*Thunder.* Enter the three Witches, meeting HECATE.

*First Witch.* Why, how now, Hecate! you look  
 angrily.

*Hec.* Have I not reason, beldams as you are,  
 Saucy and overbold? How did you dare  
 To trade and traffic with Macbeth  
 In riddles and affairs of death: 5  
 And I, the mistress of your charms,  
 The close contriver of all harms,  
 Was never call'd to bear my part,  
 Or show the glory of our art?  
 And, which is worse, all you have done 10  
 Hath been but for a wayward son,  
 Spiteful and wrathful, who, as others do,  
 Loves for his own ends,<sup>4</sup> not for you.  
 But make amends now: get you gone,

<sup>1</sup> **The season**—That which refreshes.

<sup>2</sup> **Self-abuse**—Delusion proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain.

<sup>3</sup> **Initiate fear**—Fear of a beginner.

<sup>4</sup> **Loves for his own ends**, i.e., is entirely selfish. Some suppose "loves" is a mistake for "lives."

And at the pit of Acheron <sup>1</sup> 15  
 Meet me i' the morning; thither he  
 Will come to know his destiny:  
 Your vessels and your spells provide,  
 Your charms and everything beside.  
 I am for the air; this night I'll spend 20  
 Unto a dismal and a fatal end:  
 Great business must be wrought ere noon:  
 Upon the corner of the moon  
 There hangs a vaporous drop profound;<sup>2</sup>  
 I'll catch it ere it come to ground: 25  
 And that distill'd by magic sleights  
 Shall raise such artificial sprites  
 As by the strength of their illusion  
 Shall draw him on to his confusion:  
 He shall spurn fate, scorn death, and bear 30  
 His hopes 'bove wisdom, grace and fear:  
 And you all know, security  
 Is mortals' chiefest enemy.

*[Music and a song within: "Come away,  
 come away," etc.]*<sup>3</sup>

Hark! I am call'd; my little spirit, see,  
 Sits in a foggy cloud, and stays for me. [Exit.

*First Witch.* Come, let's make haste; she'll soon be  
 back again. [Exeunt.]

<sup>1</sup> **Acheron**—A river in Greece, supposed to be the passage to the lower world. The Witches give this name to their meeting-place.

<sup>2</sup> **Profound**—Ready to fall.

<sup>3</sup> **Come away, etc.**—This song is found in Middleton's *Witch* and by some is regarded as one of the proofs that Middleton is responsible for some parts of *Macbeth*.

As in the case of the conversation between Ross and the Old Man, so in this scene we are given a glimpse of what is in the minds of people concerning Macbeth and what has happened.

SCENE VI. *Forres. The palace.**Enter LENNOX and another Lord.*

*Len.* My former speeches have but hit your thoughts,  
 Which can interpret further: only, I say,  
 Things have been strangely borne.<sup>1</sup> The gracious Duncan  
 Was pitied of Macbeth: marry,<sup>2</sup> he was dead: 5  
 And the right-vaillant Banquo walk'd too late:  
 Whom, you may say, if 't please you, Fleance kill'd,  
 For Fleance fled: men must not walk too late.  
 Who cannot want the thought how monstrous  
 It was for Malcolm and for Donalbain  
 To kill their gracious father? damned fact!<sup>3</sup> 10  
 How it did grieve Macbeth! did he not straight  
 In pious rage the two delinquents tear,  
 That were the slaves of drink and thralls of sleep?  
 Was not that nobly done? Ay, and wisely too;  
 For 't would have anger'd any heart alive 15  
 To hear the men deny't. So that, I say,  
 He has borne all things well: and I do think  
 That had he Duncan's sons under his key —  
 As, an't <sup>4</sup> please heaven, he shall not—they should find  
 What 't were to kill a father; so should Fleance. 20  
 But, peace! for from broad words <sup>5</sup> and 'cause he fail'd  
 His presence at the tyrant's feast, I hear  
 Macduff lives in disgrace: sir, can you tell  
 Where he bestows himself?

*Lord.* The son of Duncan,  
 From whom this tyrant holds <sup>6</sup> the due of birth, 25  
 Lives in the English court, and is received

<sup>1</sup> **Things . . . borne**—Strange things have happened—it is suggested that they may have been done by the king.

<sup>2</sup> **Marry**—An oath by the Virgin.

<sup>3</sup> **Fact**—Evil deed.

<sup>4</sup> **An 't**—If it.

<sup>5</sup> **From broad words**—On account of speaking too freely.

<sup>6</sup> **Holds**—Withholds.

Of the most pious Edward <sup>1</sup> with such grace  
 That the malevolence of fortune nothing  
 Takes from his high respect: <sup>2</sup> thither Macduff  
 Is gone to pray the holy king, upon <sup>3</sup> his aid 80  
 To wake Northumberland and warlike Siward:  
 That, by the help of these — with Him above  
 To ratify the work — we may again  
 Give to our tables meat, sleep to our nights,  
 Free from our feasts and banquets bloody knives, <sup>4</sup> 85  
 Do faithful homage and receive free honours: <sup>5</sup>  
 All which we pine for now: and this report  
 Hath so exasperate their king that he  
 Prepares for some attempt of war.

*Len.*

Sent he to Macduff?

*Lord.* He did: and with an absolute "Sir, not I,"  
 The cloudy <sup>6</sup> messenger turns me his back, 41  
 And hums, as who should say, "You'll rue the time  
 That clogs me with this answer."

*Len.*

And that well might

Advise him to a caution, to hold what distance  
 His wisdom can provide. Some holy angel 45  
 Fly to the court of England and unfold  
 His message ere he come, that a swift blessing  
 May soon return to this our suffering country  
 Under a hand accursed!

*Lord.*

I'll send my prayers with him.

[*Exeunt.*]

<sup>1</sup> **The most pious Edward**—The Confessor.

<sup>2</sup> **That . . . respect**—That he is none the less highly respected because fortune at this time is unkind to him.

<sup>3</sup> **Upon**—In.

<sup>4</sup> **Free . . . knives**—Remove the danger of murder and treason from our festivities.

<sup>5</sup> **Free honours**—Honour bestowed which will not make the recipient a slave or under obligation to the one who bestows it.

<sup>6</sup> **Cloudy**—Ominous.

## ACT IV.

SCENE I. *A cavern. In the middle, a boiling cauldron.*  
*Thunder. Enter the three Witches.*

*First Witch.* Thrice the brinded <sup>1</sup> cat hath mew'd.

*Sec. Witch.* Thrice, and once the hedge-pig <sup>2</sup> whined

*Third Witch.* Harpier cries 'T is time, 't is time.

*First Witch.* Round about the cauldron go;

In the poison'd entrails throw. 5

Toad, that under cold stone

Days and nights has thirty-one

Swelter'd venom <sup>3</sup> sleeping got,

Boil thou first i' the charmed pot.

*All.* Double, double toil and trouble; 10

Fire burn, and cauldron bubble.

*Sec. Witch.* Fillet <sup>4</sup> of a fenny <sup>5</sup> snake,

In the cauldron boil and bake;

Eye of newt and toe of frog,

Wool of bat and tongue of dog, 15

Adder's fork and blind-worm's <sup>6</sup> sting,

Lizard's leg and owlet's wing,

For a charm of powerful trouble,

Like a hell-broth boil and bubble.

*All.* Double, double toil and trouble; 20

Fire burn, and cauldron bubble.

<sup>1</sup> **Brinded**—Brindled. We have already had the cat associated with the Witches in the name "Graymalkin."

<sup>2</sup> **Hedge-pig**—Hedge-hog, also an evil omen.

<sup>3</sup> **Venom**—The poison of the toad lies immediately under the skin.

<sup>4</sup> **Fillet**—Slice.

<sup>5</sup> **Fenny**—From the fens or marshes.

<sup>6</sup> **Blind-worm**—Slow-worm

*Third Witch.* Scale of dragon, tooth of wolf,  
 Witches' mummy,<sup>1</sup> maw and gulf<sup>2</sup>  
 Of the ravin'd<sup>3</sup> salt-sea shark,  
 Root of hemlock digg'd i' the dark, 25  
 Liver of blaspheming<sup>4</sup> Jew,  
 Gall of goat, and slips of yew<sup>5</sup>  
 Silver'd in the moon's eclipse,<sup>6</sup>  
 Nose of Turk and Tartar's lips,  
 Finger of birth-strangled babe 30  
 Ditch-deliver'd by a drab,  
 Make the gruel thick and slab<sup>7</sup>:  
 Add thereto a tiger's chaudron,<sup>8</sup>  
 For the ingredients of our cauldron. 35

*All.* Double, double toil and trouble;  
 Fire burn, and cauldron bubble. 35

*Sec. Witch.* Cool it with a baboon's blood,  
 Then the charm is firm and good.

*Enter HECATE to the other three Witches.*

*Hec.* O, well done! I commend your pains;  
 And every one shall share i' the gains: 40  
 And now about the cauldron sing,  
 Like elves and fairies in a ring,  
 Enchanting all that you put in.

[*Music and a song: "Black spirits," etc.*  
*Hecate retires.*]

<sup>1</sup> **Mummy**—Used as a medicine and supposed to have great healing power.

<sup>2</sup> **Maw**—Stomach. **Gulf**—Gullet.

<sup>3</sup> **Ravin'd**—Ravenous.

<sup>4</sup> **Blaspheming**—Denying Christ's divinity.

<sup>5</sup> **Yew**—Is thought to be poisonous.

<sup>6</sup> **In the moon's eclipse**—At an ill-omened time.

<sup>7</sup> **Slab**—Slimy.

<sup>8</sup> **Chaudron**—Entrails.

Observe that Shakespeare has made the ingredients of the Witches' cauldron as horrible as possible, not only for dramatic effect but also to suit the public taste, which would demand such things in accordance with the superstitions of the time.



*Sec. Witch.* By the pricking of my thumbs,<sup>1</sup>  
Something wicked this way comes.

45

Open, locks,  
Whoever knocks!

*Enter MACBETH.*

*Macb.* How now, you secret, black, and midnight  
hags!  
What is't you do?

*All.* A deed without a name.

*Macb.* I conjure you, by that which you profess, 50  
Howe'er you come to know it, answer me:  
Though you untie the winds and let them fight  
Against the churches; though the yesty<sup>2</sup> waves  
Confound and swallow navigation up;  
Though bladed corn<sup>3</sup> be lodged and trees blown down;  
Though castles topple on their warders' heads; 56  
Though palaces and pyramids do slope  
Their heads to their foundations; though the treasure  
Of nature's germens tumble all together,<sup>4</sup>  
Even till destruction sicken;<sup>5</sup> answer me 60  
To what I ask you.

*First Witch.* Speak.

*Sec. Witch.* Demand.

*Third Witch.* We'll answer.

*First Witch.* Say, if thou'dst rather hear it from our  
mouths,  
Or from our masters'?

*Macb.* Call 'em; let me see 'em.

---

<sup>1</sup> **Pricking of my thumbs**—Any sudden bodily pain was supposed to foretell the approach of evil.

<sup>2</sup> **Yesty**—Foaming.

<sup>3</sup> **Bladed corn**—Still green and the ear in the blade.

<sup>4</sup> **Though the treasure . . . together**—Though all nature's elements be brought to ruin and chaos.

<sup>5</sup> **Till destruction sicken**—Till destruction itself be surfeited.

*First Witch.* Pour in sow's blood, that hath eaten  
Her nine farrow; grease that's sweaten 65  
From the murderer's gibbet throw  
Into the flame.

*All.* Come, high or low;  
Thyself and office deftly show!

*Thunder.* *First Apparition: an armed Head.*

*Macb.* Tell me, thou unknown power,—

*First Witch.* He knows thy thought:  
Hear his speech, but say thou nought. 70

*First App.* Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth! beware  
Macduff;  
Beware the thane of Fife. Dismiss me. Enough.

[Descends.]

*Macb.* Whate'er thou art, for thy good caution,  
thanks;  
Thou hast harp'd<sup>1</sup> my fear aright: but one word  
more,—

*First Witch.* He will not be commanded: here's  
another, 75  
More potent than the first.

*Thunder.* *Second Apparition: a bloody Child.*

*Sec. App.* Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth!

*Macb.* Had I three ears, I'd hear thee.

*Sec. App.* Be bloody, bold, and resolute; laugh to  
scorn  
The power of man; for none of woman born 80  
Shall harm Macbeth. [Descends.]

*Macb.* Then live, Macduff: what need I fear of thee?  
But yet I'll make assurance double sure,  
And take a bond of fate:<sup>2</sup> thou shalt not live;

<sup>1</sup> **Harp'd**—Given apt expression to.

<sup>2</sup> **Take a bond of fate**—He is going to forestall fate by killing Macduff, and hence he will obtain a "bond" or pledge that he will do him no harm.

That I may tell pale-hearted fear it lies,  
And sleep in spite of thunder.

85

*Thunder. Third Apparition: a Child crowned, with a tree in his hand.*

What is this

That rises like the issue of a king,  
And wears upon his baby-brow the round  
And top of sovereignty?<sup>1</sup>

*All.* Listen, but speak not to't.

*Third App.* Be lion-mettled, proud; and take no  
care 90

Who chafes, who frets, or where conspirers are:  
Macbeth shall never vanquish'd be until  
Great Birnam<sup>2</sup> wood to high Dunsinane<sup>3</sup> hill  
Shall come against him. [Descends.]

*Macb.* That will never be:

Who can impress the forest, bid the tree 95  
Unfix his earth-bound root? Sweet bodements!<sup>4</sup> good!  
Rebellion's head, rise never till the wood  
Of Birnam rise, and our high-placed Macbeth  
Shall live the lease of nature,<sup>5</sup> pay his breath  
To time and mortal custom.<sup>6</sup> Yet my heart 100  
Throbs to know one thing: tell me, if your art  
Can tell so much: shall Banquo's issue ever  
Reign in this kingdom?

*All.* Seek to know no more.

<sup>1</sup> **The round and top of sovereignty**—The circular crown worn on the head, marking the height of regal power.

<sup>2</sup> **Birnam**—A hill twelve miles from Dunsinane.

<sup>3</sup> **Dunsinane** is seven miles from Perth. This incident of the moving wood belongs to the old myths and was, in them, a device employed to make a false impression with regard to numbers.

<sup>4</sup> **Bodements**—Predictions.

<sup>5</sup> **Lease of nature**—His allotted number of days.

<sup>6</sup> **Pay . . . custom**—Live until he, like all other men, must submit to death.

*Macb.* I will be satisfied: deny me this,  
 And an eternal curse fall on you! Let me know. 105  
 Why sinks that cauldron? and what noise<sup>1</sup> is this?  
 [Hautboys.]

*First Witch.* Show!

*Sec. Witch.* Show!

*Third Witch.* Show!

*All.* Show his eyes, and grieve his heart; 110  
 Come like shadows, so depart!

*A show of Eight Kings,<sup>2</sup> the last with a glass in his hand;  
 Banquo's Ghost following.*

*Macb.* Thou art too like the spirit of Banquo; down!  
 Thy crown does sear mine eye-balls. And thy hair,  
 Thou other gold-bound brow, is like the first.  
 A third is like the former. Filthy hags! 115  
 Why do you show me this? A fourth! Start,<sup>3</sup> eyes!  
 What, will the line stretch out to the crack of doom<sup>4</sup>?  
 Another yet! A seventh! I'll see no more:  
 And yet the eighth appears, who bears a glass<sup>5</sup>  
 Which shows me many more; and some I see 120  
 That two-fold balls and treble sceptres<sup>6</sup> carry:  
 Horrible sight! Now, I see, 't is true;  
 For the blood-bolter'd<sup>7</sup> Banquo smiles upon me,  
 And points at them for his. [*Apparitions vanish.*]  
 What, is this so?

<sup>1</sup> **Noise**—Music.

<sup>2</sup> **Eight kings**—Eight royal descendants of Banquo who preceded James I.

<sup>3</sup> **Start**—From your sockets. He does not wish to see any more.

<sup>4</sup> **Crack of doom**—The thunder peal attending the Day of Judgment.

<sup>5</sup> **A glass**—The mirror in which future kings were reflected.

<sup>6</sup> **Two-fold balls and treble sceptres**—The two islands and three kingdoms were united under James I. This is intended as a compliment to the king.

<sup>7</sup> **Blood-bolter'd**—Covered with bolted or clotted blood.

*First Witch.* Ay, sir, all this is so: but why  
Stands Macbeth thus amazedly?

125

Come, sisters, cheer we up his sprites,  
And show the best of our delights:

I'll charm the air to give a sound,

While you perform your antic round;

130

That this great king may kindly say,

Our duties did his welcome pay.

[*Music. The Witches dance, and then vanish,  
with Hecate.*]

*Macb.* Where are they? Gone? Let this pernicious  
hour

Stand aye accursed in the calendar!

Come in, without there!

*Enter LENNOX.*

*Len.* What's your grace's will? <sup>135</sup>

*Macb.* Saw you the weird sisters? <sup>1</sup>

*Len.* No, my lord.

*Macb.* Came they not by you?

*Len.* No, indeed, my lord.

*Macb.* Infected be the air whereon they ride;  
And damn'd all those that trust them! I did hear

The galloping of horse: who was't came by? <sup>140</sup>

*Len.* 'T is two or three, my lord, that bring you word  
Macduff is fled to England.

*Macb.* Fled to England!

*Len.* Ay, my good lord.

*Macb.* Time, thou anticipat'st my dread exploits: <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **Saw you the weird sisters?**—Lennox evidently knew where to find Macbeth, and that the latter speaks so freely to him of the weird sisters would imply that, according to superstitious belief, these spirits were known and people were in the habit of consulting them.

<sup>2</sup> **Time . . . exploits**—His terrible purpose was prevented because he had not acted quickly enough.

The flighty purpose never is o'ertook 145  
 Unless the deed go with it:<sup>1</sup> from this moment  
 The very firstlings of my heart shall be  
 The firstlings of my hand. And even now,  
 To crown my thoughts with acts, be it thought and  
 done:

The castle of Macduff I will surprise; 150  
 Seize upon Fife; give to the edge o' the sword  
 His wife, his babies, and all unfortunate souls  
 That trace him in his line. No boasting like a fool;  
 This deed I'll do before this purpose cool.  
 But no more sights! — Where are these gentlemen?<sup>155</sup>  
 Come, bring me where they are. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II. *Fife. Macduff's castle.*

*Enter LADY MACDUFF, her Son, and ROSS.*

*L. Macd.* What had he done, to make him fly the  
 land?

*Ross.* You must have patience, madam.

*L. Macd.* He had none:

His flight was madness: when our actions do not,  
 Our fears do make us traitors.<sup>2</sup>

*Ross.* You know not

Whether it was his wisdom or his fear. 5

*L. Macd.* Wisdom! to leave his wife, to leave his  
 babes,

His mansion and his titles in a place  
 From whence himself does fly? He loves us not;

<sup>1</sup> **The flighty . . . it**—The only way in which he might have made sure of Macduff was by killing him as soon as suspicion first entered his mind and he had thought of the deed.

<sup>2</sup> **When our actions . . . traitors**—Macduff had not done anything treasonable, but his fear had led him to act as if he had and to desert his family.



He wants the natural touch:<sup>1</sup> for the poor wren,  
 The most diminutive of birds, will fight, 10  
 Her young ones in her nest, against the owl.  
 All is the fear and nothing is the love;<sup>2</sup>  
 As little is the wisdom, where the flight  
 So runs against all reason.

*Ross.* My dearest coz,  
 I pray you, school yourself: but for your husband, 15  
 He is noble, wise, judicious, and best knows  
 The fits o' the season.<sup>3</sup> I dare not speak much further;  
 But cruel are the times, when we are traitors  
 And do not know ourselves;<sup>4</sup> when we hold rumour  
 From what we fear,<sup>5</sup> yet know not what we fear, 20  
 But float upon a wild and violent sea  
 Each way and move.<sup>6</sup> I take my leave of you:  
 Shall not be long but I'll be here again:  
 Things at the worst will cease, or else climb upward  
 To what they were before. My pretty cousin, 25  
 Blessing upon you!

*L. Macd.* Father'd he is, and yet he's fatherless.

*Ross.* I am so much a fool, should I stay longer,  
 It would be my disgrace and your discomfort;  
 I take my leave at once. [*Exit.*

*L. Macd.* Sirrah, your father's dead: 30  
 And what will you do now? How will you live?

*Son.* As birds do, mother.

<sup>1</sup> **The natural touch**—The natural feeling for those of our own family.

<sup>2</sup> **All is the fear . . . love**—He was entirely influenced by fear and not by love.

<sup>3</sup> **Fits o' the season**—The changeable nature of the times.

<sup>4</sup> **When we are . . . ourselves**—When they are considered traitors although they do not know themselves to be such.

<sup>5</sup> **We hold . . . fear**—We believe in rumour because we fear what it asserts.

<sup>6</sup> **And move**—They are not sure of doing right moving in any direction.

*L. Macd.* What, with worms and flies?

*Son.* With what I get, I mean; and so do they.

*L. Macd.* Poor bird! thou'dst never fear the net  
nor lime,<sup>1</sup>

The pitfall nor the gin.<sup>2</sup> 35

*Son.* Why should I, mother? Poor birds they are  
not set for.<sup>3</sup>

My father is not dead, for all your saying.

*L. Macd.* Yes, he is dead: how wilt thou do for a  
father?

*Son.* Nay, how will you do for a husband?

*L. Macd.* Why, I can buy me twenty at any market.

*Son.* Then you'll buy 'em to sell again. 41

*L. Macd.* Thou speak'st with all thy wit;<sup>4</sup> and yet,  
i' faith,

With wit enough for thee.

*Son.* Was my father a traitor, mother?

*L. Macd.* Ay, that he was. 45

*Son.* What is a traitor?

*L. Macd.* Why, one that swears and lies.

*Son.* And be all traitors that do so?

*L. Macd.* Every one that does so is a traitor, and  
must be hanged. 49

*Son.* And must they all be hanged that swear and lie?

*L. Macd.* Every one.

*Son.* Who must hang them?

*L. Macd.* Why, the honest men.

*Son.* Then the liars and swearers are fools, for there  
are liars and swearers enow to beat the honest men  
and hang up them. 56

<sup>1</sup> **Lime**—Bird-lime.

<sup>2</sup> **Gin**—Snare.

<sup>3</sup> **Poor . . . for**—The rich are in danger, not the poor.

<sup>4</sup> **With all thy wit**—Shakespeare has certainly depicted a very wise child and yet one whose wisdom seems perfectly natural. His mother's conversation with him shows that she has been accustomed to his precocious questions and answers.

*L. Macd.* Now, God help thee, poor monkey!<sup>1</sup>  
But how wilt thou do for a father?

*Son.* If he were dead, you'd weep for him: if you would not, it were a good sign that I should quickly have a new father. 61

*L. Macd.* Poor prattler, how thou talk'st!

*Enter a Messenger.*

*Mess.* Bless you, fair dame! I am not known to you,  
Though in your state of honour I am perfect.<sup>2</sup>  
I doubt<sup>3</sup> some danger does approach you nearly; 65  
If you will take a homely man's advice,  
Be not found here; hence, with your little ones.  
To fright you thus, methinks, I am too savage;  
To do worse to you were fell<sup>4</sup> cruelty,<sup>5</sup> 69  
Which is too nigh your person. Heaven preserve you!  
I dare abide no longer. [Exit.

*L. Macd.* Whither should I fly?  
I have done no harm. But I remember now  
I am in this earthly world; where to do harm  
Is often laudable, to do good sometime  
Accounted dangerous folly: why then, alas, 75  
Do I put up that womanly defence,  
To say I have done no harm?

*Enter Murderers.*

What are these faces?

*First Mur.* Where is your husband?

*L. Macd.* I hope, in no place so unsanctified  
Where such as thou mayst find him.

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<sup>1</sup> **Poor monkey**—This, like "poor prattler," is a term of endearment.

<sup>2</sup> **In your state . . . perfect**—I am well acquainted with your honourable rank and character.

<sup>3</sup> **Doubt**—Fear.

<sup>4</sup> **Fell**—Wicked, dreadful.

<sup>5</sup> **To do . . . cruelty**—He has been cruel enough, but the dreadful act which will soon be done is far more cruel.

*First Mur.* He's a traitor. 80

*Son.* Thou liest, thou shag-hair'd <sup>1</sup> villain!

*First Mur.* What, you egg!  
[*Stabbing him.*]

Young fry <sup>2</sup> of treachery!

*Son.* He has kill'd me, mother:

Run away, I pray you! [*Dies.*]

[*Exit Lady Macduff, crying "Murder!"*]

*Exeunt Murderers, following her.*

SCENE III. *England. Before the King's palace.*

*Enter MALCOLM and MACDUFF.*

*Mal.* Let us seek out some desolate shade, and there  
Weep our sad bosoms empty.

*Macd.* Let us rather  
Hold fast the mortal sword, and like good men  
Bestride our down-fall'n birthdom <sup>3</sup>: each new morn  
New widows howl, new orphans cry, new sorrows 5  
Strike heaven on the face, that it resounds  
As if it felt with Scotland and yell'd out  
Like syllable of dolour. <sup>4</sup>

*Mal.* What I believe I'll wail,  
What know believe, and what I can redress,  
As I shall find the time to friend, I will. 10  
What you have spoke, it may be so perchance.  
This tyrant, whose sole name blisters our tongues,  
Was once thought honest: you have loved him well.  
He hath not touch'd you yet. I am young; but some-  
thing

<sup>1</sup> **Shag-hair'd**—Rough-headed.

<sup>2</sup> **Egg** and **fry**—The child of Macduff, and hence the "spawn of a traitor."

<sup>3</sup> **Birthdom**—Native land.

<sup>4</sup> **Like syllable of dolour**—Heaven itself is moved to give utterance to similar cries of sorrow.

You may deserve of him through me,<sup>1</sup> and wisdom 15  
 To offer up a weak poor innocent lamb  
 To appease an angry god.

*Macd.* I am not treacherous.

*Mal.* But Macbeth is.

A good and virtuous nature may recoil  
 In an imperial charge.<sup>2</sup> But I shall crave your pardon;  
 That which you are my thoughts cannot transpose: <sup>21</sup>  
 Angels are bright still, though the brightest fell:  
 Though all things foul would wear the brows of grace,  
 Yet grace must still look so.<sup>3</sup>

*Macd.* I have lost my hopes.

*Mal.* Perchance even there where I did find my 25  
 doubts.<sup>4</sup>

Why in that rawness<sup>5</sup> left you wife and child,  
 Those precious motives, those strong knots of love,  
 Without leave-taking? I pray you,  
 Let not my jealousies be your dishonours,  
 But mine own safeties.<sup>6</sup> You may be rightly just, <sup>30</sup>  
 Whatever I shall think.

*Macd.* Bleed, bleed, poor country!

Great tyranny! lay thou thy basis sure,  
 For goodness dare not check thee: wear thou thy  
 wrongs;

<sup>1</sup> **You . . . me**—Macduff might expect some reward from Macbeth if he should succeed in ruining Malcolm.

<sup>2</sup> **A good . . . charge**—Although Macduff is noble, he may degenerate when obeying the commands of such a king as Macbeth.

<sup>3</sup> **Look so**—Look fair, like grace. Virtue will always look the same even though vice should assume her guise.

<sup>4</sup> **Perchance . . . doubts**—Malcolm suspected him because he had deserted his family.

<sup>5</sup> **In that rawness**—Hastily, and hence not taking proper means to protect them.

<sup>6</sup> **Let . . . safeties**—My suspicions are not to be regarded as dishonouring you, but to assure my own safety.

The title is affeer'd!<sup>1</sup> Fare thee well, lord:  
 I would not be the villain that thou think'st 35  
 For the whole space that's in the tyrant's grasp,  
 And the rich East to boot.

*Mal.* Be not offended:  
 I speak not as in absolute fear of you.  
 I think our country sinks beneath the yoke;  
 It weeps, it bleeds; and each new day a gash 40  
 Is added to her wounds: I think withal  
 There would be hands uplifted in my right;  
 And here from gracious England<sup>2</sup> have I offer  
 Of goodly thousands: but, for all this,  
 When I shall tread upon the tyrant's head, 45  
 Or wear it on my sword, yet my poor country  
 Shall have more vices than it had before,  
 More suffer and more sundry<sup>3</sup> ways than ever,  
 By him that shall succeed.

*Macd.* What should he be?<sup>4</sup>

*Mal.* It is myself I mean: in whom I know 50  
 All the particulars of vice so grafted  
 That, when they shall be open'd, black Macbeth  
 Will seem as pure as snow, and the poor state  
 Esteem him as a lamb, being compared  
 With my confineless harms.<sup>5</sup>

*Macd.* Not in the legions  
 Of horrid hell can come a devil more damn'd 55  
 In evils to top Macbeth.

*Mal.* I grant him bloody,  
 Luxurious,<sup>6</sup> avaricious, false, deceitful,  
 Sudden, malicious, smacking of every sin

<sup>1</sup> **Affeer'd**—Confirmed. (A legal term.)

<sup>2</sup> **England**—The king of England.

<sup>3</sup> **More sundry**—In more various.

<sup>4</sup> **What . . . be?**—What person, or who might that be?

<sup>5</sup> **Confineless harms**—Boundless vices.

<sup>6</sup> **Luxurious**—Lustful.



That has a name: but there's no bottom, none, 60  
 In my voluptuousness: your wives, your daughters,  
 Your matrons and your maids, could not fill up  
 The cistern of my lust, and my desire  
 All continent<sup>1</sup> impediments would o'erbear  
 That did oppose my will: better Macbeth 65  
 Than such an one to reign.

*Macd.*

Boundless intemperance

In nature is a tyranny;<sup>2</sup> it hath been  
 The untimely emptying of the happy throne  
 And fall of many kings. But fear not yet  
 To take upon you what is yours: you may 70  
 Convey<sup>3</sup> your pleasures in a spacious plenty,  
 And yet seem cold, the time you may so hoodwink.<sup>4</sup>  
 We have willing dames enough; there cannot be  
 That vulture in you, to devour so many  
 As will to greatness dedicate themselves, 75  
 Finding it so inclined.

*Mal.*

With this there grows

In my most ill-compos'd affection<sup>5</sup> such  
 A staunchless<sup>6</sup> avarice that, were I king,  
 I should cut off the nobles for their lands,  
 Desire his<sup>7</sup> jewels and this other's house: 80  
 And my more-having would be as a sauce  
 To make me hunger more; that I should forge  
 Quarrels unjust against the good and loyal,  
 Destroying them for wealth.

<sup>1</sup> **Continent**—Restraining.

<sup>2</sup> **Boundless . . . tyranny**—Uncontrolled desires finally prove stronger than the man and exercise tyranny over him.

<sup>3</sup> **Convey**—Secretly enjoy.

<sup>4</sup> **The time . . . hoodwink**—You may so completely deceive people.

<sup>5</sup> **Ill-compos'd affection**—Nature or disposition disposed to evil.

<sup>6</sup> **Staunchless**—Insatiable.

<sup>7</sup> **His**—This one's.

*Macd.*

This avarice

Sticks deeper, grows with more pernicious root 85  
 Than summer-seeming<sup>1</sup> lust, and it hath been  
 The sword of our slain kings: yet do not fear;  
 Scotland hath foisons<sup>2</sup> to fill up your will,  
 Of your mere own: all these are portable,<sup>3</sup>  
 With other graces weigh'd.<sup>4</sup> 90

*Mal.* But I have none: the king-becoming graces,  
 As justice, verity,<sup>5</sup> temperance,<sup>6</sup> stableness,  
 Bounty, perseverance, mercy, lowliness,  
 Devotion, patience, courage, fortitude,  
 I have no relish of them,<sup>7</sup> but abound 95  
 In the division<sup>8</sup> of each several crime,  
 Acting it many ways. Nay, had I power, I should  
 Pour the sweet milk of concord into hell,  
 Uproar<sup>9</sup> the universal peace, confound  
 All unity on earth.

*Macd.* O Scotland, Scotland! 100

*Mal.* If such a one be fit to govern, speak:  
 I am as I have spoken.

*Macd.* Fit to govern!

No, not to live. O nation miserable,  
 With an untitled tyrant bloody-scepter'd,  
 When shalt thou see thy wholesome days again, 105  
 Since that the truest issue of thy throne

<sup>1</sup> **Summer-seeming**—Passing quickly.

<sup>2</sup> **Foisons**—Plenty.

<sup>3</sup> **Portable**—Endurable.

<sup>4</sup> **With . . . weigh'd**—When other graces counterbalance them.

<sup>5</sup> **Verity**—Honesty.

<sup>6</sup> **Temperance**—Self-restraint.

<sup>7</sup> **I have no relish of them**—He has none of these qualities, even in the slightest degree.

<sup>8</sup> **In the division**—In every form.

<sup>9</sup> **Uproar**—Uproot.

By his own interdiction<sup>1</sup> stands accursed,  
 And does blaspheme his breed<sup>2</sup>? Thy royal father  
 Was a most sainted king: the queen that bore thee,  
 Oftener upon her knees than on her feet, 110  
 Died every day she lived.<sup>3</sup> Fare thee well!  
 These evils thou repeat'st upon thyself  
 Have banish'd me from Scotland. O my breast,  
 Thy hope ends here!

*Mal.* Macduff, this noble passion,  
 Child of integrity, hath from my soul 115  
 Wiped the black scruples, reconciled my thoughts  
 To thy good truth and honour. Devilish Macbeth,  
 By many of these trains<sup>4</sup> hath sought to win me  
 Into his power, and modest wisdom<sup>5</sup> plucks me  
 From over-credulous haste: but God above 120  
 Deal between thee and me! for even now  
 I put myself to thy direction, and  
 Unspeak mine own detraction,<sup>6</sup> here abjure  
 The taints and blames I laid upon myself,  
 For<sup>7</sup> strangers to my nature. I am yet 125  
 Unknown to woman, never was forsworn,  
 Scarcely have coveted what was mine own,  
 At no time broke my faith, would not betray  
 The devil to his fellow, and delight  
 No less in truth than life: my first false speaking 130  
 Was this upon myself: what I am truly,  
 Is thine and my poor country's to command:  
 Whither indeed, before thy here-approach,

---

<sup>1</sup> **Interdiction**—Malcolm's own words were sufficient to give a reason for his exclusion.

<sup>2</sup> **Blaspheme his breed**—Slander his parentage.

<sup>3</sup> **Died . . . lived**—Lived each day in readiness for death.

<sup>4</sup> **Trains**—Crafty devices.

<sup>5</sup> **Modest wisdom**—Caution which shows wisdom.

<sup>6</sup> **Unspeak . . . detraction**—Declare that the evil I have spoken against myself is false.

<sup>7</sup> **For**—As.

Old Siward,<sup>1</sup> with ten thousand warlike men,  
 Already at a point,<sup>2</sup> was setting forth. 135  
 Now we'll together; and the chance of goodness  
 Be like our warranted quarrel!<sup>3</sup> Why are you silent?

*Macd.* Such welcome and unwelcome things at once  
 'T is hard to reconcile.

*Enter a Doctor.*

*Mal.* Well; more anon.— Comes the king forth, I  
 pray you? 140

*Doct.* Ay, sir; there are a crew of wretched souls  
 That stay his cure:<sup>4</sup> their malady convinces  
 The great assay of art;<sup>5</sup> but at his touch —  
 Such sanctity hath heaven given his hand —  
 They presently amend.

*Mal.* I thank you, doctor. 145

*[Exit Doctor.]*

*Macd.* What's the disease he means?

*Mal.* 'T is call'd the evil:<sup>6</sup>

A most miraculous work in this good king;  
 Which often, since my here-remain in England,  
 I have seen him do. How he solicits heaven,  
 Himself best knows; but strangely-visited<sup>7</sup> people, 150  
 All swoll'n and ulcerous, pitiful to the eye,

<sup>1</sup> **Old Siward**—According to Holinshed Duncan had married a daughter of Siward, Earl of Northumberland.

<sup>2</sup> **At a point**—Prepared.

<sup>3</sup> **The chance . . . quarrel**—May their success be as certain as that their cause is just.

<sup>4</sup> **Stay his cure**—Wait for him to heal them.

<sup>5</sup> **Their malady . . . art**—Medical skill has no power over their disease.

<sup>6</sup> **The evil**—Scrofula, or king's evil, so called because an anointed king was the only person who could cure it. This picture of a good king healing the maladies of his subjects, although the subject of much criticism, is highly dramatic in so far as it serves to enhance the wickedness of Macbeth.

<sup>7</sup> **Strangely-visited**—Strangely afflicted.

The mere despair of surgery,<sup>1</sup> he cures,  
 Hanging a golden stamp<sup>2</sup> about their necks,  
 Put on with holy prayers:<sup>3</sup> and 't is spoken,  
 To the succeeding royalty he leaves 155  
 The healing benediction. With this strange virtue,  
 He hath a heavenly gift of prophecy,  
 And sundry blessings hang about his throne  
 That speak him full of grace.

*Enter Ross.*

*Macd.* See, who comes here?

*Mal.* My countryman;<sup>4</sup> but yet I know him not. 160

*Macd.* My ever-gentle cousin, welcome hither.

*Mal.* I know him now. Good God, betimes remove  
 The means that makes us strangers!

*Ross.* Sir, amen.

*Macd.* Stands Scotland where it did?

*Ross.* Alas, poor country! 170

Almost afraid to know itself. It cannot  
 Be call'd our mother, but our grave; where nothing,  
 But who knows nothing, is once seen to smile;  
 Where sighs and groans and shrieks that rend the air  
 Are made, not mark'd; where violent sorrow seems  
 A modern ecstasy:<sup>5</sup> the dead man's knell 175  
 Is there scarce ask'd for who; and good men's lives  
 Expire before the flowers in their caps,  
 Dying or ere they sicken.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **The mere . . . surgery**—Medical aid was absolutely powerless.

<sup>2</sup> **Stamp**—Coin.

<sup>3</sup> **Hanging . . . prayers**—A custom of later days, Charles II and Queen Anne.

<sup>4</sup> **My countryman**—Evidently his dress betokened that he was.

<sup>5</sup> **A modern ecstasy**—An ordinary grief.

<sup>6</sup> **Good . . . sicken**—Good men die before the heath (stuck in their bonnets on the march) has time to wither.

*Macd.*

O, relation.

Too nice,<sup>1</sup> and yet too true!*Mal.*

What's the newest grief?

*Ross.* That of an hour's age doth hiss the speaker:<sup>2</sup>  
Each minute teems a new one.*Macd.*

How does my wife? 176

*Ross.* Why, well.*Macd.*

And all my children?

*Ross.*

Well too.

*Macd.* The tyrant has not batter'd at their peace?*Ross.* No; they were well at peace when I did leave  
'em. 179*Macd.* Be not a niggard of your speech: how goes 't?*Ross.* When I came hither to transport the tidings,  
Which I have heavily borne, there ran a rumour  
Of many worthy fellows that were out<sup>3</sup>;  
Which was to my belief witness'd the rather,  
For that I saw the tyrant's power<sup>4</sup> a-foot: 185  
Now is the time of help; your eye<sup>5</sup> in Scotland  
Would create soldiers, make our women fight,  
To doff their dire distresses.*Mal.*

Be 't their comfort

We are coming thither: gracious England hath  
Lent us good Siward and ten thousand men; 190  
An older and a better soldier none  
That Christendom gives out.*Ross.*

Would I could answer

This comfort with the like! But I have words  
That would be howl'd out in the desert air,<sup>1</sup> **Too nice**—Too exact.<sup>2</sup> **That . . . speaker**—If a man mentioned a crime which had happened only one hour before, the listener would hiss him because it was old, so many having been committed since.<sup>3</sup> **Were out**—Were (up) in arms.<sup>4</sup> **Power**—Army.<sup>5</sup> **Your eye**—The sight of you.



Where hearing should not latch <sup>1</sup> them.

*Macd.* What concern they? <sup>195</sup>

The general cause? or is it a fee-grief <sup>2</sup>

Due to some single breast?

*Ross.* No mind that's honest  
But in it shares some woe; though the main part  
Pertains to you alone.

*Macd.* If it be mine,  
Keep it not from me, quickly let me have it. <sup>200</sup>

*Ross.* Let not your ears despise my tongue for ever,  
Which shall possess them with the heaviest sound  
That ever yet they heard.

*Macd.* Hum! I guess at it.

*Ross.* Your castle is surprised; your wife and babes  
Savagely slaughter'd; to relate the manner, <sup>205</sup>  
Were, on the quarry <sup>3</sup> of these murder'd deer,  
To add the death of you.

*Mal.* Merciful heaven!

What, man! ne'er pull your hat upon your brows;  
Give sorrow words: the grief that does not speak  
Whispers the o'er-fraught heart and bids it break. <sup>4</sup> <sup>210</sup>

*Macd.* My children too?

*Ross.* Wife, children, servants, all  
That could be found.

*Macd.* And I must be from thence!  
My wife kill'd too?

*Ross.* I have said.

*Mal.* Be comforted.

Let's make us medicines of our great revenge,  
To cure this deadly grief. <sup>5</sup> <sup>215</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **Latch**—Catch.

<sup>2</sup> **Fee-grief**—The property of one individual.

<sup>3</sup> **Quarry**—Dead bodies. (Slaughtered game.)

<sup>4</sup> **The grief . . . break**—The grief that cannot find expression breaks the heart and causes death.

<sup>5</sup> **Let's . . . grief**—Let us forget or cure our grief by taking vengeance.

*Macd.* He has no children. All my pretty ones?  
 Did you say all? O hell-kite! All?  
 What, all my pretty chickens and their dam  
 At one fell swoop?

*Mal.* Dispute<sup>1</sup> it like a man.

*Macd.* I shall do so;

220

But I must also feel it as a man:

I cannot but remember such things were,  
 That were most precious to me. Did heaven look on,  
 And would not take their part? Sinful Macduff,  
 They were all struck for thee! naught that I am, 225  
 Not for their own demerits, but for mine,  
 Fell slaughter on their souls. Heaven rest them now!

*Mal.* Be this the whetstone of your sword: let grief  
 Convert to anger; blunt not the heart, enrage it.

*Macd.* O, I could play the woman with mine eyes<sup>230</sup>  
 And braggart with my tongue! But, gentle heavens,  
 Cut short all intermission; front to front  
 Bring thou this fiend of Scotland and myself;  
 Within my sword's length set him; if he 'scape,  
 Heaven forgive him too!

*Mal.* This tune goes manly.<sup>2</sup>

235

Come, go we to the king; our power is ready;  
 Our lack is nothing but our leave:<sup>3</sup> Macbeth  
 Is ripe for shaking, and the powers above  
 Put on<sup>4</sup> their instruments. Receive what cheer you  
 may:

The night is long that never finds the day.<sup>5</sup> [*Exeunt.* 240

<sup>1</sup> **Dispute**—Fight with and endure your grief.

<sup>2</sup> **This . . . manly**—You are speaking as becomes a man.

<sup>3</sup> **Our lack . . . leave**—We have nothing left to do but to take leave or say farewell.

<sup>4</sup> **Put on**—Set to work.

<sup>5</sup> **The night is long that never finds the day**, and "Time and the hour runs through the roughest day," are both lines typical of the pervading sentiment of the play.

## ACT V.

SCENE I. *Dunsinane. Anteroom in the castle.*

*Enter a Doctor of Physic and a Waiting Gentlewoman.*

*Doct.* I have two nights watched with you, but can perceive no truth in your report. When was it she last walked?

*Gent.* Since his majesty went into the field,<sup>1</sup> I have seen her rise from her bed, throw her nightgown upon her, unlock her closet, take forth paper, fold it, write upon't, read it, afterwards seal it, and again return to bed; yet all this while in a most fast sleep. 8

*Doct.* A great perturbation in nature, to receive at once the benefit of sleep, and do the effects<sup>2</sup> of watching!<sup>3</sup> In this slumbry agitation, besides her walking and other actual performances, what, at any time, have you heard her say?

*Gent.* That, sir, which I will not report after her. 14

*Doct.* You may to me: and 't is most meet you should.

*Gent.* Neither to you nor any one; having no witness to confirm my speech.<sup>4</sup>

*Enter LADY MACBETH, with a taper.*

Lo you, here she comes! This is her very guise;<sup>5</sup> and, upon my life, fast asleep. Observe her; stand close.

*Doct.* How came she by that light? 21

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<sup>1</sup> **Into the field**—According to this, Macbeth must have been driven into his castle.

<sup>2</sup> **Effects**—Actions.

<sup>3</sup> **Watching**—Waking.

<sup>4</sup> **Having . . . speech**—It would be dangerous for her to speak as what she had to tell would be treasonable.

<sup>5</sup> **Her very guise**—Her ordinary manner.

*Gent.* Why, it stood by her: she has light by her continually; 't is her command.

*Doct.* You see, her eyes are open.

*Gent.* Ay, but their sense is shut.<sup>1</sup>

25

*Doct.* What is it she does now? Look, how she rubs her hands.

*Gent.* It is an accustomed action with her, to seem thus washing her hands: I have know her continue in this a quarter of an hour.

30

*Lady M.* Yet here's a spot.

*Doct.* Hark! she speaks: I will set down what comes from her, to satisfy my remembrance the more strongly.<sup>2</sup>

*Lady M.* Out, damned spot! out I say! — One: two:<sup>3</sup> why, then 't is time to do 't.— Hell is murky!<sup>4</sup>— Fie, my lord, fie! a soldier, and afeard? What need we fear who knows it, when none can call our power to account? — Yet who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him.

40

*Doct.* Do you mark that?

*Lady M.* The thane of Fife had a wife: where is she now?—What, will these hands ne'er be clean? — No more o' that, my lord, no more o' that; you mar all with this starting.<sup>5</sup>

45

*Doct.* Go to, go to; you have known what you should not.

*Gent.* She has spoken what she should not, I am

<sup>1</sup> **Their sense is shut**—She is asleep, and hence is unconscious of what is around her.

<sup>2</sup> **To satisfy . . . strongly**—To make quite sure that I remember correctly, and hence may make no mistake.

<sup>3</sup> **One: two**—She is thinking of the time and the striking of the clock, which was to be a signal for the murder.

<sup>4</sup> **Hell is murky!**—This exclamation is the direct outcome of her fears of retribution.

<sup>5</sup> **You mar . . . starting**—She is thinking of Macbeth's actions on the night of Banquo's murder, when he so betrayed himself.

sure of that: heaven knows what she has known. 49

*Lady M.* Here's the smell of the blood still: all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand. Oh, oh, oh!

*Doct.* What a sigh is there! The heart is sorely charged.

*Gent.* I would not have such a heart in my bosom for the dignity of the whole body. 50

*Doct.* Well, well, well,—

*Gent.* Pray God it be, sir.

*Doct.* This disease is beyond my practice: yet I have known those which have walked in their sleep who have died holily in their beds. 61

*Lady M.* Wash your hands, put on your nightgown; look not so pale.—I tell you yet again, Banquo's buried: he cannot come out on's grave.

*Doct.* Even so? 65

*Lady M.* To bed, to bed! there's knocking at the gate: come, come, come, come, give me your hand. What's done cannot be undone.—To bed, to bed, to bed! *[Exit.* 70

*Doct.* Will she go now to bed?

*Gent.* Directly.

*Doct.* Foul whisperings are abroad:<sup>1</sup> unnatural deeds  
Do breed unnatural troubles: infected minds  
To their deaf pillows will discharge their secrets:<sup>2</sup>  
More needs she the divine than the physician. 75  
God, God forgive us all! Look after her;  
Remove from her the means of all annoyance,  
And still keep eyes upon her. So, good night:  
My mind she has mated<sup>3</sup> and amazed my sight. 79

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<sup>1</sup> **Foul whisperings are abroad**—It is being darkly hinted that evil deeds have been done.

<sup>2</sup> **Infected . . . secrets**—Minds burdened with a sense of crime will betray their secrets in sleep, as Lady Macbeth is doing.

<sup>3</sup> **Mated**—Bewildered.

I think, but dare not speak.

*Gent.*

Good night, good doctor. <sup>80</sup>

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *The country near Dunsinane.*

*Drum and colours. Enter MENTEITH, CAITHNESS, ANGUS, LENNOX, and Soldiers.*

*Ment.* The English power is near, led on by Malcolm,  
His uncle Siward and the good Macduff:  
Revenge burn in them; for their dear causes  
Would to the bleeding and the grim alarm  
Excite the mortified man.<sup>1</sup>

*Ang.* Near Birnam wood 5  
Shall we well meet them; that way are they coming.

*Caith.* Who knows if Donalbain be with his brother?

*Len.* For certain, sir, he is not: I have a file  
Of all the gentry: there is Siward's son,  
And many unrough <sup>2</sup> youths that even now 10  
Protest their first of manhood.<sup>3</sup>

*Ment.* What does the tyrant?

*Caith.* Great Dunsinane he strongly fortifies:  
Some say he's mad; others that lesser hate him  
Do call it valiant fury: but, for certain,  
He cannot buckle his distemper'd cause 15  
Within the belt of rule.<sup>4</sup>

*Ang.* Now does he feel  
His secret murders sticking on his hands;

<sup>1</sup> **Would . . . man**—Would even excite a dead man to answer a call to arms, which would mean bloodshed and destruction.

<sup>2</sup> **Unrough**—Beardless.

<sup>3</sup> **Protest . . . manhood**—Testify for the first time that they are men, or show that even thus early in life they are to be considered men.

<sup>4</sup> **He cannot . . . rule**—He cannot direct or control his disorganized party.



Now minutely<sup>1</sup> revolts upbraid his faith-breach;<sup>2</sup>  
 Those he commands move only in command,  
 Nothing in love: now does he feel his title 20  
 Hang loose about him,<sup>3</sup> like a giant's robe  
 Upon a dwarfish thief.

*Ment.* Who then shall blame  
 His pester'd senses to recoil and start,  
 When all that is within him does condemn  
 Itself for being there?

*Caith.* Well, march we on, 25  
 To give obedience where 't is truly owed:  
 Meet we the medicine of the sickly weal,  
 And with him pour we in our country's purge  
 Each drop of us.<sup>4</sup>

*Len.* Or so much as it needs,  
 To dew the sovereign flower<sup>5</sup> and drown the weeds. 30  
 Make we our march towards Birnam.

[*Exeunt, marching.*]

SCENE III. *Dunsinane. A room in the castle.*

*Enter MACBETH, Doctor, and Attendants.*

*Macb.* Bring me no more reports; let them fly all:  
 Till Birnam wood remove to Dunsinane,  
 I cannot taint with fear. What's the boy Malcolm?  
 Was he not born of woman? The spirits that know

<sup>1</sup> **Minutely**—Every minute.

<sup>2</sup> **Upbraid his faith-breach**—By their revolt, others are now reminding him of his treachery towards Duncan.

<sup>3</sup> **Now does . . . about him**—His kingly authority has lost its power.

<sup>4</sup> **The medicine of the sickly weal . . . us**—The physician, Malcolm, was to administer that which would heal his suffering country, and they would assist him in ridding it of a tyrant.

<sup>5</sup> **To dew the sovereign flower**—To strengthen Malcolm as king.

All mortal consequences have pronounced me<sup>1</sup> thus:  
 "Fear not, Macbeth; no man that's born of woman  
 Shall e'er have power upon thee." Then fly, false  
     thanes,

And mingle with the English epicures:<sup>2</sup>  
 The mind I sway by and the heart I bear  
 Shall never sag with doubt nor shake with fear. 10

*Enter a Servant.*

The devil damn thee black, thou cream-faced loon!  
 Where got'st thou that goose look?

*Serv.* There is ten thousand —

*Macb.* Geese, villain?

*Serv.* Soldiers, sir.

*Macb.* Go prick thy face, and over-red thy fear,  
 Thou lily-liver'd boy. What soldiers, patch<sup>3</sup>? 15  
 Death of thy soul! those linen cheeks of thine  
 Are counsellors to fear.<sup>4</sup> What soldiers, whey-face?

*Serv.* The English force, so please you.

*Macb.* Take thy face hence. [Exit Servant.

Seyton! — I am sick at heart,

When I behold — Seyton, I say! — This push 20  
 Will cheer me ever, or disease me now.<sup>5</sup>

I have lived long enough: my way of life  
 Is fall'n into the sear, the yellow leaf;  
 And that which should accompany old age,  
 As honour, love, obedience, troops of friends, 25  
 I must not look to have; but in their stead,  
 Curses, not loud but deep, mouth-honour, breath,

<sup>1</sup> **Pronounced me**—Spoken to me.

<sup>2</sup> **The English epicures**—The Scotch were in the habit of accusing the English of gluttony.

<sup>3</sup> **Patch**—Fool.

<sup>4</sup> **Are counsellors to fear**—Lead others to fear.

<sup>5</sup> **Will cheer me ever, or disease me now**—"Will chair me ever or disseat me now" is another reading. The first seems more in keeping with Macbeth's other speeches.

Which the poor heart would fain deny, and dare not.  
Seyton!

*Enter SEYTON.*

*Sey.* What is your gracious pleasure?

*Macb.* What news more?

*Sey.* All is confirm'd, my lord, which was reported. <sup>31</sup>

*Macb.* I'll fight till from my bones my flesh be hack'd.  
Give me my armour.

*Sey.* 'T is not needed yet.

*Macb.* I'll put it on.

Send out more horses; skirr<sup>1</sup> the country round; <sup>35</sup>  
Hang those that talk of fear. Give me mine armour.  
How does your patient, doctor?

*Doct.* Not so sick, my lord,  
As she is troubled with thick-coming fancies,  
That keep her from her rest.

*Macb.* Cure her of that. <sup>40</sup>  
Canst thou not minister to a mind diseased,  
Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow,  
Raze out the written troubles of the brain <sup>2</sup>  
And with some sweet oblivious antidote  
Cleanse the stuff'd<sup>3</sup> bosom of that perilous stuff  
Which weighs upon the heart?

*Doct.* Therein the patient <sup>45</sup>  
Must minister to himself.

*Macb.* Throw physic to the dogs; I'll none of it.  
Come, put mine armour on; give me my staff.<sup>4</sup>  
Seyton, send out. Doctor, the thanes fly from me.  
Come, sir, dispatch. If thou couldst, doctor, cast <sup>50</sup>  
The water of my land,<sup>5</sup> find her disease,

<sup>1</sup> **Skirr**—Scour.

<sup>2</sup> **Raze . . . brain**—Clear the brain of those troubles which are deep-seated or permanent.

<sup>3</sup> **Stuff'd**—Overburdened.

<sup>4</sup> **Staff**—Lance or general's staff.

<sup>5</sup> **Cast the water . . . land**—A medical expression

And purge it to a sound and pristine health,  
 I would applaud thee to the very echo,  
 That should applaud again.—Pull't off, I say.<sup>1</sup>—  
 What rhubarb, senna, or what purgative drug, 55  
 Would scour these English hence? Hear'st thou of  
 them?

*Doct.* Ay, my good lord; your royal preparation  
 Makes us hear something.

*Macb.* Bring it after me.  
 I will not be afraid of death and bane,  
 Till Birnam forest come to Dunsinane. 60

*Doct.* [*Aside*] Were I from Dunsinane away and clear,  
 Profit again should hardly draw me here. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV. *Country near Birnam wood.*

*Drum and colours. Enter MALCOLM, old SIWARD and  
 his SON, MACDUFF, MENTEITH, CAITHNESS, ANGUS,  
 LENNOX, ROSS, and Soldiers, marching.*

*Mal.* Cousins, I hope the days are near at hand  
 That chambers will be safe.<sup>2</sup>

*Ment.* We doubt it nothing.

*Siw.* What wood is this before us?

*Ment.* The wood of Birnam.

*Mal.* Let every soldier hew him down a bough  
 And bear 't before him: thereby shall we shadow 5  
 The numbers of our host and make discovery<sup>3</sup>  
 Err in report of us.

*Soldiers.* It shall be done.

*Siw.* We learn no other but the confident tyrant  
 Keeps still in Dunsinane, and will endure

<sup>1</sup> **Pull 't off, etc.**—He is speaking of his armour.

<sup>2</sup> **Chambers . . . safe**—Macbeth said, "There's not a man of them but in his house I keep a servant fee'd." So we can readily understand that they would not be safe even in their bedrooms or private apartments.

<sup>3</sup> **Discovery**—Those who discover or see us, i.e., spies.

Our setting down before 't.<sup>1</sup>

*Mal.* 'Tis his main hope: 10

For where there is advantage to be given,  
Both more and less have given him the revolt,<sup>2</sup>  
And none serve with him but constrained things  
Whose hearts are absent too.

*Macd.* Let our just censures

Attend the true event,<sup>3</sup> and put we on 15  
Industrious soldiership.

*Siw.* The time approaches

That will with due decision make us know  
What we shall say we have and what we owe.  
Thoughts speculative their unsure hopes relate,  
But certain issue strokes must arbitrate:<sup>4</sup> 20  
Towards which advance the war. [*Exeunt, marching.*]

SCENE V. *Dunsinane. Within the castle.*

*Enter MACBETH, SEYTON, and Soldiers, with drum  
and colours.*

*Macb.* Hang out our banners on the outward walls;  
The cry is still "They come:" our castle's strength  
Will laugh a siege to scorn: here let them lie  
Till famine and the ague eat them up:  
Were they not forced<sup>5</sup> with those that should be ours,  
We might have met them dareful, beard to beard, 6

<sup>1</sup> **Our . . . 't**—Our beginning a siege.

<sup>2</sup> **For where . . . revolt**—Wherever they have seen any possibility of withstanding him, both nobles and commons have rebelled.

<sup>3</sup> **Let our just . . . event**—It will be time enough for them to pass true judgment when events have shown how matters stand, and in the meantime their duty is to thoroughly prepare for battle.

<sup>4</sup> **Thoughts . . . arbitrate**—They must act and let deeds decide the issue of events, if they are going to make themselves certain of success.

<sup>5</sup> **Forced**—Reinforced or assisted.

And beat them backward home.

[*A cry of women within.*

What is that noise?

*Sey.* It is the cry of women, my good lord.

*Macb.* I have almost forgotten the taste of fears:  
The time has been my senses would have cool'd <sup>1</sup> 10  
To hear a night-shriek; and my fell of hair <sup>2</sup>  
Would at a dismal treatise rouse and stir  
As life were in't: I have supp'd full with horrors;  
Direness,<sup>3</sup> familiar to my slaughterous thoughts,  
Cannot once start me.

*Re-enter SEYTON.*

Wherefore was that cry? <sup>15</sup>

*Sey.* The queen, my lord, is dead.

*Macb.* She would have died hereafter;  
There would have been a time for such a word.<sup>4</sup>  
To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,  
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day 20  
To the last syllable of recorded time, <sup>5</sup>  
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools  
The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!  
Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player  
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage 25  
And then is heard no more: <sup>6</sup> it is a tale

<sup>1</sup> **Cool'd**—Quailed or recoiled.

<sup>2</sup> **Fell of hair**—Hair. **Fell**—Skin (scalp covered with hair.)

<sup>3</sup> **Direness**—Anything causing horror.

<sup>4</sup> **She . . . word**—Death is inevitable and such news would be brought some time.

<sup>5</sup> **To-morrow . . . time**—To-morrow soon becomes to-day, and will to the end of recorded time.

<sup>6</sup> **Life's . . . more**—Shakespeare was fond of comparisons from stage life. This particular part reminds us of Antonio's speech in *The Merchant of Venice*: "I hold the world but as the world, a stage where every man must play a part."



Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,  
Signifying nothing.

*Enter a MESSENGER.*

Thou comest to use thy tongue; thy story quickly.

*Mess.* Gracious my lord, 30  
I should report that which I say I saw,  
But know not how to do it.

*Macb.* Well, say, sir.

*Mess.* As I did stand <sup>1</sup> my watch upon the hill,  
I look'd toward Birnam, and anon, methought,  
The wood began to move.

*Macb.* Liar and slave! 35

*Mess.* Let me endure your wrath, if't be not so:  
Within this three mile <sup>2</sup> may you see it coming;  
I say, a moving grove.

*Macb.* If thou speak'st false,  
Upon the next tree shalt thou hang alive,  
Till famine cling <sup>3</sup> thee: if thy speech be sooth, 40  
I care not if thou dost for me as much.

I pull in resolution, and begin  
To doubt the equivocation of the fiend  
That lies like truth: <sup>4</sup> "Fear not, till Birnam wood  
Do come to Dunsinane," and now a wood 45  
Comes toward Dunsinane. Arm, arm, and out!

If this which he avouches does appear,  
There is nor flying hence nor tarrying here.  
I gin to be aweary of the sun,  
And wish the estate o' the world <sup>5</sup> were now undone. 50

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<sup>1</sup> **Stand**—Keep.

<sup>2</sup> **This three mile**—Sh. Eng., these three miles.

<sup>3</sup> **Cling**—Shrivel.

<sup>4</sup> **To doubt . . . truth**—To suspect that the fiend has equivocated and has spoken only seeming truth.

<sup>5</sup> **The estate o' the world**—The settled or determined order of affairs in the world.

Ring the alarum-bell! Blow, wind! come, wrack!  
At least we'll die with harness on our back. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI. *Dunsinane. Before the castle.*

*Drum and colours. Enter MALCOLM, old SIWARD,  
MACDUFF, and their Army, with boughs.*

*Mal.* Now near enough: your leafy screens throw  
down,  
And show like those you are. You, worthy uncle,  
Shall, with my cousin, your right-noble son,  
Lead our first battle:<sup>1</sup> worthy Macduff and we  
Shall take upon's what else remains to do, 5  
According to our order.

*Siw.* Fare you well.  
Do we but find the tyrant's power to-night,  
Let us be beaten, if we cannot fight.

*Macd.* Make all our trumpets speak; give them all  
breath,  
Those clamorous harbingers of blood and death. 10  
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE VII. *Another part of the field.*

*Alarums. Enter MACBETH.*

*Macb.* They have tied me to a stake; I cannot fly,  
But, bear-like, I must fight the course.<sup>2</sup> What's he  
That was not born of woman? Such a one  
Am I to fear, or none.

*Enter young SIWARD.*

*Yo. Siw.* What is thy name?

*Macb.* Thou'lt be afraid to hear it.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **Battle**—Division of the army.

<sup>2</sup> **They have tied . . . course**—Just as the bear is tied and forced to ward off every attack of the dogs, so Macbeth in his castle must turn to bay and defend himself.

*Yo. Siw.* No; though thou call'st thyself a hotter name

Than any is in hell.

*Macb.* My name's Macbeth.

*Yo. Siw.* The devil himself could not pronounce a title

More hateful to mine ear.

*Macb.* No, nor more fearful.

*Yo. Siw.* Thou liest, abhorred tyrant; with my sword 10

I'll prove the lie thou speak'st.

*[They fight and young Siward is slain.]*

*Macb.* Thou wast born of woman.

But swords I smile at, weapons laugh to scorn,  
Brandish'd by man that's of a woman born. *[Exit.]*

*Alarums. Enter MACDUFF.*

*Macd.* That way the noise is. Tyrant, show thy face!

If thou be'st slain and with no stroke of mine, 15  
My wife and children's ghosts will haunt me still.  
I cannot strike at wretched kerns, whose arms  
Are hired to bear their staves:<sup>1</sup> either thou, Macbeth,  
Or else my sword with an unbatter'd edge  
I sheathe again undeeded.<sup>2</sup> There thou should'st be;<sup>20</sup>  
By this great clatter, one of greatest note  
Seems bruited.<sup>3</sup> Let me find him, fortune!  
And more I beg not. *[Exit. Alarums.]*

*Enter MALCOLM and old SIWARD.*

*Siw.* This way, my lord; the castle's gently render'd<sup>4</sup>:  
The tyrant's people on both sides do fight; 25

<sup>1</sup> **Staves**—Lances.

<sup>2</sup> **Undeeded**—Without killing any one.

<sup>3</sup> **Bruited**—Announced with clamour.

<sup>4</sup> **Gently render'd**—Given up readily, without any great struggle.

The noble thanes do bravely in the war;  
The day almost itself professes yours,  
And little is to do.

*Mal.* We have met with foes  
That strike beside us.<sup>1</sup>

*Siw.* Enter, sir, the castle.

[*Exeunt. Alarums.*]

SCENE VIII. *Another part of the field.*

*Enter MACBETH.*

*Macb.* Why should I play the Roman fool,<sup>2</sup> and die  
On mine own sword? whiles I see lives, the gashes  
Do better upon them.

*Enter MACDUFF.*

*Macd.* Turn, hell-hound, turn!

*Macb.* Of all men else I have avoided thee:  
But get thee back; my soul is too much charged<sup>5</sup>  
With blood of thine already.

*Macd.* I have no words:  
My voice is in my sword: thou bloodier villain  
Than terms can give thee out!<sup>3</sup> [*They fight.*]

*Macb.* Thou lovest labour:  
As easy mayst thou the intrenchant<sup>4</sup> air  
With thy keen sword impress as make me bleed:<sup>10</sup>  
Let fall thy blade on vulnerable crests;  
I bear a charmed life,<sup>5</sup> which must not yield  
To one of woman born.

<sup>1</sup> **Strike beside us**—Have deserted the cause of Macbeth and fight with us.

<sup>2</sup> **Play the Roman fool**—Commit suicide as the old Romans did, preferring this to being captured or public disgrace.

<sup>3</sup> **Thou bloodier villain . . . out**—Thou villain, bloodier than words can describe.

<sup>4</sup> **Intrenchant**—That cannot be cut.

<sup>5</sup> **A charmed life**—If the words of the Witches were positively true, he could not be killed.

*Macd.* Despair thy charm;  
 And let the angel<sup>1</sup> whom thou still hast served  
 Tell thee, Macduff was from his mother's womb  
 Untimely ripp'd. 15

*Macb.* Accursed be that tongue that tells me so,  
 For it hath cow'd my better part of man!<sup>2</sup>  
 And be these juggling fiends no more believed,  
 That palter with us in a double sense; 20  
 That keep the word of promise to our ear,  
 And break it to our hope. I'll not fight with thee.

*Macd.* Then yield thee, coward,  
 And live to be the show and gaze o' the time:  
 We'll have thee, as our rarer monsters are, 25  
 Painted upon a pole,<sup>3</sup> and underwrit,  
 "Here may you see the tyrant."

*Macb.* I will not yield,  
 To kiss the ground before young Malcolm's feet,  
 And to be baited with the rabble's curse.<sup>4</sup>  
 Though Birnam wood be come to Dunsinane, 30  
 And thou opposed, being of no woman born,  
 Yet will I try the last.<sup>5</sup> Before my body  
 I throw my warlike shield. Lay on, Macduff,  
 And damn'd be him that first cries "Hold, enough!"  
 [Exeunt, fighting. Alarums.]

*Retreat. Flourish. Enter, with drum and colours,*  
*MALCOLM, old SIWARD, ROSS, the other Thanes,*  
*and Soldiers.*

*Mal.* I would the friends we miss were safe arrived.

<sup>1</sup> *Angel*—Spirit. (Here evil.)

<sup>2</sup> *Cow'd* . . . *man*—Made me lose courage.

<sup>3</sup> *Upon a pole*—Upon a cloth suspended upon a pole.

<sup>4</sup> *To be baited* . . . *curse*—As a bear is baited by the dogs, he will be scoffed at and cursed by the rabble.

<sup>5</sup> *Will I try the last*—The soldier courage of Macbeth has asserted itself and he no longer relies on the words of the Witches.

*Siw.* Some must go off:<sup>1</sup> and yet, by these I see, <sup>36</sup>  
So great a day as this is cheaply bought.

*Mal.* Macduff is missing, and your noble son.

*Ross.* Your son, my lord, has paid a soldier's debt:  
He only lived but till he was a man; <sup>40</sup>  
The which no sooner had his prowess confirm'd  
In the unshrinking station where he fought,<sup>2</sup>  
But like a man he died.

*Siw.* Then he is dead?

*Ross.* Ay, and brought off the field: your cause of  
sorrow  
Must not be measured by his worth, for then <sup>45</sup>  
It hath no end.

*Siw.* Had he his hurts before?

*Ross.* Ay, on the front.

*Siw.* Why then, God's soldier be he! <sup>3</sup>  
Had I as many sons as I have hairs,  
I would not wish them to a fairer death:  
And so, his knell is knoll'd.

*Mal.* He's worth more sorrow, <sup>50</sup>  
And that I'll spend for him.

*Siw.* He's worth no more:  
They say he parted well, and paid his score:  
And so, God be with him! Here comes newer comfort.

*Re-enter MACDUFF, with MACBETH'S head.*

*Macd.* Hail, king! for so thou art: behold, where  
stands <sup>4</sup>  
The usurper's cursed head: the time is free; <sup>55</sup>  
I see thee compass'd with thy kingdom's pearl,<sup>5</sup>  
That speak my salutation in their minds;

<sup>1</sup> **Go off**—Be killed.

<sup>2</sup> **The which . . . fought**—No sooner had he proved this by his bravery in maintaining his position, unskaken, etc.

<sup>3</sup> **God's soldier be he**—I am satisfied that he should die.

<sup>4</sup> **Stands**—Is held on a spear.

<sup>5</sup> **Pearl**—Choicest men.



Whose voices I desire aloud with mine:

Hail, King of Scotland!

*All.*

Hail, King of Scotland!

*[Flourish.]*

*Mal.* We shall not spend a large expense of time <sup>60</sup>  
 Before we reckon with your several loves,<sup>1</sup>  
 And make us even with you. My thanes and kinsmen,  
 Henceforth be earls,<sup>2</sup> the first that ever Scotland  
 In such an honour named. What's more to do,  
 Which would be planted newly with the time, <sup>65</sup>  
 As calling home our exile'd friends abroad  
 That fled the snares of watchful tyranny;  
 Producing forth<sup>3</sup> the cruel ministers  
 Of this dead butcher and his fiend-like queen,<sup>4</sup>  
 Who, as 't is thought, by self and violent hands <sup>70</sup>  
 Took off<sup>5</sup> her life; this, and what needful else  
 That calls upon us, by the grace of Grace,  
 We will perform in measure, time and place:  
 So, thanks to all at once and to each one,  
 Whom we invite to see us crown'd at Scone. <sup>75</sup>

*[Flourish. Exeunt.]*

<sup>1</sup> **Your several loves**—The love of each individual.

<sup>2</sup> **Be earls, the first, etc.**—This is historically true, according to Holinshed.

<sup>3</sup> **Producing forth**—Bringing to justice.

<sup>4</sup> **Fiend-like queen**—This conception of Lady Macbeth's character seems to be the historical one, for the play itself does not bear this out. Some suggest that this part of the play is corrupt, as Shakespeare, the actor, had quitted the stage ere this.

<sup>5</sup> **Took off**—Ended.













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